Fifty Reasons
OR
MOTIVES,
Why the Roman Catholick Apoſtolick Religion ought to be preferr'd to all the Sects this Day in
CHRISTENDOM,
And which induced his moſt Serene Highneſs
Anthony Ulrick
Duke of *Brunſwick* and *Lunenburg*, *&c.* to abjure Lutheraniſm.

To which are added,
Three Valuable Papers.

ANTWERP:
Printed in the Year, 1715.

Three Valuable

PAPERS

Annexed to theſe

MOTIVES

FIRST

The Deciſion of the Proteſtant Univerſity of *Helmſtadt*, in favour of the Roman Catholick Religion.

SECOND,

Copies of two Papers written by the late K. *Charles* II. of bleſſed Memory.

THIRD,

A Copy of a Paper written by the late Dutcheſs of *York*.

THE TRANSLATOR's PREFACE.

THE Author of this ſmall Book, *Anthony Ulrick* Duke of *Brunſwick Lunenburg* and *Wolfembuttel*. by returning in his old Age to the Communion of that Church, which his Anceſtors in the foregoing Century had exchang'd for one new raiſed by *Luther*, gives a Leſſon to Perſons of every Age and Condition, that neither the Concerns of this World, nor the Principles of Education, nor a Fear of diſpleaſing Friends, or of owning our ſelves to have been in the wrong, ought to hinder us from embracing Truth, whenſoever God is pleaſed in his Mercy to let us know it.

'Tis the Unhappineſs of too many Chriſtians in our Days to be biaſs'd by one or more of theſe unwarrantable Motives in Contradiction to the Dictates both of Reaſon and Religion. For ſince Chriſt has built a Church for the ſaving of our Souls, it muſt certainly be a very great Preſumption, for any Man to expect a Share in the Promiſes made to her of the

he Remiſſion of Sin, and of a glorious Re-ſurrection to eternal Life, if he takes no Care to inform himſelf whether the Communion, in which he happen'd to receive his Educati-on, be that true Church or not.

But this wiſe Prince being fully reſolv'd to ſave his Soul, had no Regard to humane Mo-tives. He conſider'd, that a wilful Separati-on from the true Catholick Church would ex-clude him from Heaven; that as there were many *damnable* Hereſies in former Ages, the infinite Variety of Sects in theſe our Days were a ſufficient Argument to believe theſe latter Ages were not exempt from the like de-ſtructive Errors; and that, ſince every Branch of Proteſtancy pretended to be the pureſt Part of the Reformation, and quarrel'd with all the Reſt, as well as with the Church of *Rome*, which equally condemn'd them all, he could not anſwer it to his Conſcience nor to Jeſus Chriſt, if he acquieſced in the Dictates of the *Lutheran Church* which had nurſed him up, without taking an impartial View of all Perſwaſions, and examining them by ſuch Texts of Scripture as are intended to inform and guide our Judgment in the Things we are to believe of God and of this Church.

How any Man, that calls himſelf a Prote-ſtant, can diſpenſe himſelf from the like En-quiry, I cannot underſtand. It being a firſt Principle of the *Reformation*, that every Chriſtian is to gather the Articles of his Faith not from the Lips of his Paſtor, but from Scripture by his *Private Judgment*, that is to

ſay, by the Induſtry of his own Enquiries. Now, if any one is deſirous to comply with his Obligation in this Particular, this Book will preſent him with a ſhort and eaſy Method of Proceeding in this neceſſary Search. And provided he enters upon it with thoſe pious Diſpoſitions the Author mentions in his Preface, 'tis to be hoped, he will reap the like Comforts from his Labour.

An *Engliſh* Proteſtant may perhaps be apt to think, that the Duke does now and then charge the *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* with Opinions they never held. For his Vindication, I have added ſome References, which will direct the Reader where to find whatever is imputed to them. And becauſe *Luther* and *Calvin* were the two Leading Men of the Reformation, I have chiefly cited their Works; and where it could be done, without ſwelling the Book too much, I have given him their very Words. And if theſe appear on ſome Occaſion to be rather the Suggeſtions of a ſeducing Spirit than the Inſpirations of the Holy Ghoſt, it will not be raſh to ſay, that God never ſent them to reform the eſtabliſh'd Doctrine of his Church.

THE

The Author's PREFACE.

THO' for many Years I had employ'd all the Study and Pains and Diligence I was able, in an Enquiry after the true Religion and ſanctifying Faith, which I was ſenſible could be but one, and this upon no other Motive than a Concern for my eternal Welfare, and a deſire to know the Truth; I was yet in Doubt, out of ſo many Religions and Confeſſions, which it was that I ought to embrace. In the mean while, upon this Diſign, I viſited ſeveral Univerſities, I turn'd over whole Libraries, I read the Works of innumerable Authors, as well Catholicks as others, that treated of our preſent Controverſies; I adviſed with a great many Doctors touching the Diverſity of Sects and Confeſſions; I propoſed my Doubts not only to Catholicks, but likewiſe to their Adverſaries; in a Word, I tryed all Ways and Means, without being able to find

out the only Thing I desired. This made me resolve to set all other Business aside, and to choose a proper Time and Place, wherein I might wholly apply my self to this Affair, as being of all others the most Important, because nothing less than an Eternity of Happiness or of Misery depended on it. But that this Enquiry might be to good Effect, and carry me to the Thing I aim'd at, I thought it were best to enter upon it in the Manner following.

First, I earnestly implor'd the Aid and Grace of the Holy Ghost, and with all my Power begg'd the Light of a true Faith of God, the Father of Lights, who (1) Lighteth every Man that cometh into the World. *For Faith is that singular Gift of God, whereby Man is so far enlightned, as firmly to believe all that God has reveal'd.*

Secondly, I made a strong Resolution by the Grace of God to avoid Sin,

(1) John 1. v 9.

well

well knowing, that (1) Wiſdom will not enter a corrupted Soul, nor dwell in a Body ſubject to Sin, *And I am convinced, and was ſo then, that the Reaſon why ſo many are Ignorant of the true Faith, and do not embrace it, is becauſe they are plung'd into ſeveral Vices, and particularly into carnal Sins.*

Thirdly, I renounced all Sorts of Prejudices, which incline Men more to one Religion than to another, whatever they were, which I might unhappily have formerly eſpouſed; and I brought myſelf to a perfect indifferency, ſo as to be ready to embrace whichſoever the Grace of the Holy Ghoſt and the Light of Reaſon ſhould point out to me, without any Regard to the Advantages and Inconveniencies that might attend it in this World.

In fine, I enter'd upon this Deliberation and this Choice, in the Manner

(1) Wiſdom 1. *v.* 4.

I ſhould wiſh to have done it at the Hour of my Death, and in a full Conviction, that at the Day of Judgment I muſt give an Account to God, why I follow'd this Religion preferable to all the reſt. Being thus diſpoſed, I reſolv'd abſolutely to reject any wherein I diſcover'd the leaſt Error in Points of Faith. For (1) the Church of the living God is, *and ought to be,* the Pillar and Ground of Truth.

Now the Pillar and Ground of Truth, ſupports no Error; therefore the true Church of God can hold nothing Erroneous in her Articles of Faith. After I had thus diſpoſed my ſelf, to obſerve ſome Method, I ſuppoſed in the firſt Place, there were certain infallible Principles of Chriſtian Faith, in which all Chriſtian Societies, how different ſoever, muſt neceſſarily agree, and which no Chriſtian can deny without incurring the Guilt of Blaſphemy, of Impiety and of Atheiſm.

(1) Tim. 3. v. 15.

After-

Afterwards I laid down Principles, agreeable to the Reaſon of Mankind, and conſulted by every Man of Senſe when he is to make his Choice in the Concerns of this Life.

The Principles agreed upon by all Chriſtian Societies are ſuch as theſe,

1. *There is one God.*

2. *This God is a moſt perfect Being, eſſentially comprehending in it ſelf all Perfection, without the leaſt mixture of a Defect.*

3. *From hence it follows, that he is eſſentially True, ſo that he can neither deceive, nor be deceiv'd, nor ſpeak an Untruth, nor reveal a Thing otherwiſe than he knows it, nor know it otherwiſe than it is in itſelf. Inſomuch that by his Nature he is true both in his Knowledge and in his Word.*

4. *God is Almighty.* With God (1) all things are poſſible. With God (2) nothing ſhall be impoſſible. *Tho' this ſurpaſſes the Underſtanding of Men and Angels*

(1) St. Matth. 19. v. 26. (2) St. Luke 1. v. 37.

5. God

5. *God is faithful without any Injuſtice.* (1) All his Ways are Judgment: A God of Truth, and without Iniquity, Juſt and Right is he.

6. *God is immutable.* (2) God is not a Man, that he ſhould lie, neither the Son of Man, that he ſhould repent. With him (3) is no variableneſs, neither Shadow of turning. *By conſequence, all that God reveals, is true and poſſible at the ſame Time; he has a Power and a Will to effect, and infallibly will effect whatſoever he promiſes.*

7. *God is moſt Wiſe.* His (4) Wiſdom is infinite.

8. *God is infinitely Merciful.* (5) The Lord God merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in Mercy and Truth. (6) The Earth, O Lord! is full of thy Mercy.

---

(1) Deut. 32. *v.* 4.
(2) Numb. 23 *v.* 19.
(3) St. James 1. *v.* 17.
(4) Pſal. 147. *v.* 5
(5) Exod. 34. *v.* 6.
(6) Pſal. 119. *v.* 64.

9. God

9. *God is just. He rewards the Good, and punishes the Wicked.* (1) The Lord is righteous in all his ways. (2) He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

10. *God is essentially Holiness, Goodness and Benignity in Perfection,* (3) Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts. *He is holy not only in himself, but he is likewise* (4) Holy in all his Works. *'Tis certain therefore and unquestionable, that whatever Doctrine contains any thing repugnant to these divine Perfections, is altogether false; and that what Sect soever holds any such Doctrine for a Rule of Faith, is erroneous, and by Consequence is absolutely to be rejected, and ought not to be a Subject of Deliberation.*

11. *Man has but one Soul, which will be eternally either damn'd, or*

(1) Psal. 145. v. 17. (2) Heb. 11. v. 6.
(3) Isaiah 6. v. 3. (4) Psal. 145. v. 17.

saved.

saved. (1) For what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?

12. *Eternity knows no End. The Course of it is perpetual. 'Tis a Series of unlimited Time, and a number of innumerable Ages to come.*

13. *There is no Comparison between Things Infinite and those that are not so. O the Happiness of the Eternity of the Saints! O the Unhappiness of that of the Damned! One of these two Eternities waits for us. Without a true Faith, I shall never attain the Eternity of the Saints; and if I do not attain it, the Eternity of the Damn'd must be my Lot.*

---

(1) St. Matth. 16. 26.

RULES

RULES OF PRUDENCE,

Which ought to be follow'd, principally when we are to make a Choice in Matters of the greatest Moment.

1. IN the Eſtimate and Choice of Things, a Man is always to prefer better to worſe; and, by a ſtronger Reaſon, to what is bad; and ſo Things certain, to doubtful and uncertain; true, to falſe; permanent, to paſſing; eternal, to temporal; and ſuch as are grounded in Reaſon, to others that hold no Correſpondence with it.

2. To attain to our laſt End, the only Object of our juſt Deſires, the Means, we uſe, muſt be proportionable; and of theſe, the certain muſt take Place of

thoſe that are leſs certain, or altogether uncertain.

3. Among the Means to attain to our eternal Welfare, thoſe by which many Perſons have undoubtedly acquired it, are more ſecure than thoſe by which it is not evident that any Man was ever ſaved.

4. Again, the Means, which Reaſon and the Authority of Perſons eminent for Wiſdom, Vertue and Sanctity preſcribe in order to eternal Salvation, or which the Holy Ghoſt himſelf preſcribes, are more ſecure, than thoſe that have only the Recommendation of Fleſh and Blood, of the World, of diſorderly and licentious Men: For, (1) *It is the Spirit that quickneth, the Fleſh profiteth nothing.* (2) *For they that are after the Fleſh, do mind the things of the Fleſh: And they that are after the Spirit, do the Things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded, is Death: But to be ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace: Becauſe the carnal Mind is enmity againſt God: For it is not ſubject to the Law of God, — So then, they that are in the Fleſh, cannot pleaſe God.*

(1) John 6. v. 63. (2) Rom. 8. v. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Upon

Upon theſe Principles and Rules of Prudence, I proceeded to the following Conſiderations, which diſcovered to me many convincing Motives, why I ſhould rather chooſe and embrace the Roman Catholick Faith, than any of thoſe Sects into which the Chriſtian World ſtands now divided, and at laſt determined me to reject them all.

Conſideration I.

This ſubject Matter of my firſt Conſideration was, whether it were better for me to embrace the *Catholick* Communion, or the *Evangelical*, a Title, which the *Lutherans* and the *Calviniſts* in ſome Places do equally boaſt of. Conſidering therefore what the Catholick Communion was, I immediately diſcover'd it to be the Communion of thoſe, who all the World over, and in all Times follow the Roman Perſwaſion, which every where agrees with it ſelf as to Articles of Faith. On the other Side, conſidering the Communion, which ſtyles it ſelf *Evangelical*, at the very firſt Sight I diſcovered a very dangerous Rock: For thus I reaſon'd the Matter with my ſelf. This Evangelical Communion

ſhould

ſhould be one, that in its Doctrine is wholly agreeable to the Goſpel: Now the Doctrine which at the ſame Time is follow'd both by *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* can never be conformable to the Goſpel: For two Doctrines that are oppoſite, or directly contradictory to each other, are never to be reconciled to one and the ſame Goſpel-Truth; but either the one or the other muſt be irreconcileable, 'Tis clear that the Doctrine of the *Lutherans* and that of the *Calviniſts*, are in many Articles oppoſite, and in ſome directly contradictory to each other. Therefore it is not poſſible for both of them at the ſame Time, to conſtitute an Evangelical Communion; by conſequence this Communion is a meer Chimera. For my Part, being to make my Choice, I could not content my ſelf with a Fancy, but I thought it my Obligation to make a diligent Search into the Truth of Things, which divine Faith commands us to believe: For this Reaſon I would not declare for this Evangelical State, but on the contrary I judged I ought not by any Means to make it my Choice.

Consideration II.

In the next Place I consider'd, since the *Calvinist* and the *Lutheran* Religions could not both be rightly styled *Evangelical*, whether one of the two, if separately taken, might not possibly be so, and deserve by consequence to be valued above the other? But here I was perplex'd with a new Difficulty. For my Reason told me, that to give one Thing the Preference to another, there must be more pressing Motives on the one side, than on the other. Now I was not able to find a Reason, why the *Lutheran* Doctrine should rather be *Evangelical* than the *Calvinist*, so far from it, that I could never yet obtain the Favour of any *Lutheran* or *Calvinist*, to help me to such a Reason. The two Parties alledge in their Defence some Texts of Scripture; but then whatever is cited, the *Lutherans* interpret to one Sense, and the *Calvinists* to another. The *Lutherans* will have their Exposition to be true and literal, and that of the *Calvinists* to be false and strain'd: And then on the other side the *Calvinists* are as positive that their's is the proper and genuine

Ex-

Expoſition, and that of the *Lutherans* erroneous and unnatural. In this Quarrel both build upon the Lights of their private Spirits, which are irreconcileably different, and neither Side is able to produce the leaſt Colour of a Proof, that his Adverſary's Spirit deviates from the true Senſe, or that his own has hit upon it. The Caſe ſtanding thus, it was not in my Power to prefer one of theſe Doctrines before the other, and therefore I concluded they were both to be rejected.

Conſideration III.

I am as much at a Loſs to know upon what Principle the *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* exclude the *Arians* and *Anabaptiſts* out of their *Evangelical* Communion: For theſe pretend an equal Right to the Name, and that their Doctrine is agreeable to the Truth of the Goſpel, nay, that they are more properly *Evangelical*, than their *Lutherans* or *Calviniſts*. We read not, ſay the *Anabaptiſts*, in any Part of the Goſpel, that Infants ought to be Baptiz'd. Jeſus Chriſt himſelf ſays in St. *Mark* (1) *He that believeth and is bap-*

(1) St. Mark 16.

tiz'd,

ized, ſhall be ſaved. Therefore Faith muſt go before Baptiſm; now Faith is only to be found in thoſe that are paſt their Childhood, therefore no one till then ought to be Baptized: Our Doctrine, by Conſequence is more agreeable to the Goſpel than that of *Lutherans* or *Calviniſts*, who admit the Baptiſm of Infants. And thus plead the *Arians*, our Saviour ſays expreſly in St. *John*'s Goſpel (1) *My Father is greater than I.* We follow then the Goſpel, when we teach that, as to the Divine Nature, the Son is not equal, but inferior to his Father. We admit not upon this Text the Interpretation of the Fathers, who will have it that the Son is leſs than his Father, according to his human Nature, but equal to him according to his Divinity; for we think the *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* have no Right to force upon us any ſuch Interpretation, ſince they reject the Authority of Fathers in the Controverſies that are on Foot between them and Catholicks. For we ſee no Reaſon, why their Authority ſhould be allow'd in this Point, and not in others.

(1) St. John 14. 28.

But

But if the *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* in
ſiſt upon their own Authority, or the In
terpretation of their private Spirit, th
Arians and *Anabaptiſts* will require ther
to point out in expreſs Terms this the
Interpretation in the Scripture; becau
'tis a Principle with all of them, tha
NOTHING IS TO BE BELIEVE
AS AN ARTICLE OF FAITH, BU
WHAT THE SCRIPTURE TEA
CHES IN EXPRESS, INTELLIG
BLE AND CLEAR TERMS.

Conſideration IV.

The Conſideration call'd to my Re-
membrance thoſe Words of the Prophet
Jeremy (1) *Stand ye in the Ways, and ſee,*
and ask for the old Paths, where is the good
Way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find
reſt for your Souls. And I judged that the
way to Heaven, by which a great many
have certainly arrived at it, was better
had leſs of Danger and more of Securi-
ty, than that by which it is not known
whether any one to this Day arrived
Then I thus diſcourſed the Matter in
my own Thoughts: It is own'd by all
the World, that a great many are ſaved

(1) Jeremy 6. 16.

who lived and died in the Roman Catholick Communion: But who can tell whether any of the other Religions are so? I inferr'd that, in the great Concern of Salvation, the Roman Catholick Faith was a surer way, than any other Religion, and that by consequence I was obliged to choose it before all the rest.

Consideration V.

I pursued my Argument in this manner. Whosoever is saved, pleased God: *But without Faith* (1) *it is impossible to please him*: Therefore that Faith and Religion, by which a Man may be saved, is the true. Now it cannot be question'd, but that great Numbers of Persons who profess the Roman Catholick Faith have been saved, (it is a Truth our very Adversaries dare not deny.) By consequence the Roman Catholick Faith is the true Faith; therefore it is our Duty to embrace it.

(1) Heb. 11. 6.

Con-

Conſideration VI.

From this Argument I drew another. As there is but one true God, ſo is there but one true Faith. According to thoſe Words of the Apoſtle (1) *One Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm.* There can only then be one true and ſanctifying Faith, as there is but one Lord and one God. So that, if the Catholick Faith be the true and ſanctifying (as is proved above) all the other Sorts of Religions, are without the leaſt Appearance of a true Faith; and ſince no Salvation is attainable without the Catholick Faith, I was bound to chooſe that of the Roman Catholicks.

Conſideration VII.

But what ſtill confirm'd me in my Reſolution of embracing the Roman Catholick Faith, was this, that the Hereticks themſelves confeſs Roman Catholicks may be ſaved, whereas theſe maintain there is no Salvation for ſuch as * are out of the Roman Catholick Church.

---

(1) Epheſ. 4. 5.

* *Through Obſtinacy or wilful Neglect.*

What

hat a Madneſs then were it, for any an not to go over to the Roman Catolicks, who may be ſaved in the Judgent of their Adverſaries; but to ſort nſelf with theſe, who according to man Catholicks are out of the Way? ho would not adviſe a Man to take ſafeſt way when he is threatned th any evident Danger? And does t that Way which two oppoſite Parties prove of, promiſe greater Security n another which one Party only remends, and which the other conns! Who, infine, can doubt, but a Medicine preſcribed by two Phyns may be taken with more Security, n another which one of the two judmay be his Death?

Conſideration VIII.

Upon calling to Mind thoſe Words *Deuteronomy* (1) *Ask thy Father, and he ll ſhew thee, thy Elders, and they will l thee.* And thoſe in the *Proverbs* (2) *move not the ancient land-mark, which y Fathers have ſet.* I conſulted the Writings of the ancient Fathers, to find

(1) Deut. 32. 7. (2) Prov. 22. 28.

what they would adviſe me to do; wh
ther to embrace the Roman Catholi
Faith, or ſome of the other Perſuaſion
The firſt I met with was St. *Auguſtin*, wh
of a Manich became a Roman Cath
lick, and has left us the Motives of h
Converſion, (2) in theſe Words. *The*
are many things which moſt juſtly hold me
the Communion of the Catholick Church: T
Agreement of People and Nations holds me
Authority begun with Miracles, nouriſh
with Hope, increas'd with Charity, co
firm'd by Antiquity, holds me: A Succeſſi
of Biſhops deſcending from the See of St. P
ter, *to whom Chriſt after his Reſurrecti*
committed his Flock to the preſent Epiſcopac
holds me. And in his Book of the A
vantage of believing, (3) *Are we afrai*
ſays he, *of embracing the Communion of th*
Church, which, as all Mankind knows,
a continued Succeſſion of Biſhops in the Ap
ſtolick See (in ſpite of Hereticks barking
every ſide, and condemn'd partly by the Vo
of the People, partly by the Gravity of Cou
cils, partly by Miracles) has the higheſt A
thority? The ſecond was St. *Irenæ*
more ancient than St. *Auguſtin*, wh

(1) St. Aug. *againſt the Epiſtle of* Manichæu
call'd the Foundation, chap. 4. (2) chap. 1
ſpeakin

peaking of the Roman Church, ſays (1) hat *to this Church, by reaſon of its greater ower, it is neceſſary that all Churches have ecourſe; that is the Faithful on all ſides.* he third was *Tertullian*, (2) *Happy*, ſays e, *is the Church in her State, for which the poſtles pour'd forth all their Doctrines toge- er with their Blood.* The fourth, St. *Je- ome*; (3) *Know*, ſays he, *that the Roman aith is warranted by* Paul's *Authority.* nd (4) in another Place. *To ſpeak my pinion clearly and in a few Words, 'tis this, hat we ought to continue in that Church, hich was founded by the Apoſtles, and re- mains to this Day*: Where he is ſpeaking of the Roman Church. In fine, St. *Gre- ory Nazianzen* in the Poem he writ on his own Life, gives this Anſwer to my Queſtion, *The Roman Faith was right in times paſt, and even now it continues to be right, uniting in an amiable Knot, all that the Sun ſees in his Courſe.* Having heard theſe Evidences, I could not but yield to the Judgment of thoſe Wiſe and Holy Fa- thers, and ſo reſolv'd to embrace the Ro- man Catholick Faith.

(1) *Lib.* 3. *c.* 3. (2) De Præſcrip. *c.* 36. (3) Epiſ. 3. cont. Ruffin. *cap.* 4. (4) Dial. ultimo cont. Lucifer.

Conſideration IX.

After this, I appeal'd to the Saints of God, and asked them what was the Faith they lived in, and by which they arrived at eternal Bliſs. And they all made anſwer, it was the Roman Faith. Thus I was anſwer'd by St. *Martin*, St. *Nicholas*, St. *Athanaſius* and many more among the Biſhops; among the Religious, by St. *Dominick*, St. *Francis*, *&c.* among the Widows, by St. *Monica*, St. *Bridget*, St. *Elizabeth*, *&c.* among the Virgins, by St. *Agatha*, St. *Lucy*, St. *Agnes*, St. *Catherine*, *&c.* whence I drew this Concluſion. Theſe Saints by following this Faith obtain'd eternal Glory; this Faith then muſt doubtleſs be the ſureſt and ſafeſt way to Heaven: It is therefore to no purpoſe to ſeek another.

Conſideration X.

Then I turn'd to the Holy Martyrs, and inquir'd what Faith it was, for the Truth of which they ſpilt their Blood, and ſo patiently endured Baniſhments, Priſons and all the moſt cruel Torments? They

They anſwer'd me, as with one Voice that this Faith was no other than the Roman Catholick. This I was aſſured of by Thirty-three Biſhops of *Rome*, who were Crown'd with Martyrdom: By the Saints *Cyprian*, *Sebaſtian*, *Laurence*; by St. *Agatha*, St. *Cecily*, St. *Dorothy*, St. *Barbara* and an infinite number of other Saints. Then I wound up my Argument in this manner. It is a natural Impoſſibility for that Faith to be falſe, in Defence of which ſuch an Army of Witneſſes have ſo glorioufly, ſo readily and ſo willingly given their Lives. How could I therefore any longer doubt of the Truth of the Roman Catholick Faith?

Conſideration XI.

My next ſtep was in Thought to Hell, where I found condemn'd to everlaſting Torments *Simon Magus*, *Novatus*, *Vigilantius*, *Pelagius*, *Neſtorius*, *Macedonius*, *Marcion*, *&c.* And I asked them, how they came to be condemn'd to that Seat of Sorrow, without Hopes of being ever reſcued from theſe Flames? And they told me, it was for their breaking off from the Roman Catholick Church, and for being Authors of the Sects which

ſeparated from it. My Inference from this diſmal Contemplation, was, that I ought not to ſeparate from the Catholick Church, unleſs I were content to burn eternally with thoſe Apoſtates.

Conſideration XII.

No Man can doubt, but that St. *Paul*'s Faith was truly Apoſtolical. Now this was no other than the Roman, as himſelf teſtifies in his Epiſtle to the Chriſtians of *Rome*. (1) *I long to ſee you, that I may impart unto you ſome ſpiritual Gift, to the end you may be eſtabliſh'd. That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual Faith both of you and me.* Therefore the Roman Faith, was once the Apoſtolical Faith. That it was ſo in the beginning our Adverſaries very eaſily grant us; but they pretend, tho' without a Proof, that afterwards it ceaſed to be the True and Apoſtolical; which the Roman Catholicks abſolutely deny. For if any one ask them, in what Points, where and when the Faith of the Church of *Rome* decay'd, they are

(1) Rom. 1. 11, 12.

at

at a loſs for an Anſwer; and yet it lies upon them to prove it. In effect, did we put the Caſe, that a certain Family was own'd by all the World to have been in ancient Times of a noble Race, and that ſome one ſhould now maintain that of late it had loſt its Rank, which he grants it formerly poſſeſs'd, would not ſuch a Man be obliged to point out the time when, and to bring a Reaſon why it loſt its Nobility? And if he could not prove it, would not any equitable Judge condemn him as a Slanderer?

Conſideration XIII.

While I was deliberating, whether I ought to fix upon the Roman Catholick Faith, or upon ſome other that ſtands in Competition with it, a new difficulty preſented it ſelf, *viz.* that, if I ſet aſide the Roman Catholick, it would ſtill remain to be examin'd, which of the oppoſite Religions I ought to adhere to. Whether the *Lutheran*? The *Calviniſt*? The *Arian*? Or the *Anabaptiſt*? And it would require much Time and Study, to come to a Reſolution; becauſe theſe Religions in many Points differ from one another, even to the Degree of

charging their Adverſaries (*) with deſtructive Errors. Nay, let it be ſuppoſed that I had made my Choice of ſome one of theſe; I could not yet diſpenſe my ſelf from a farther Deliberation. For all theſe Religions have ſprouted into different Branches; ſo that a new Scrutiny would ſtill be neceſſary, to know into which of theſe Diviſions or Subdiviſions I ought to graft my ſelf. For theſe Reaſons I thought the beſt thing, I could do, was to reject them all in the Groſs, and to return to the Pale of the Roman Catholick Church, to which Jeſus Chriſt himſelf (1) *gave ſome, Apoſtles; and ſome, Prophets; and ſome, Evangeliſts; and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtery, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt... That we henceforth be no more Children toſſed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine by the ſlight of Men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

(*) *See the firſt Poſtſcript to Monſr.* Meaux's *Hiſtory of Variations.*

(1) Epheſ. 4. 11, 12, 14.

Con-

Conſideration XIV.

When I firſt enter'd upon this Enquiry, I reſolved with my ſelf to reject without more ado any Sect or Religion whatſoever, in which I diſcover'd Errors contrary to Faith and to right Reaſon: And proceeding upon the Principles I have laid down at the beginning of this Tract, I examin'd ſeveral Tenets of the modern Religions, which are held in Oppoſition to thoſe of the Roman Catholick Church; I conſider'd them one by one, and took a diſtinct View of every particular. My firſt Reaſoning was to this effect, God is infinite in Wiſdom and in Goodneſs: He has laid upon us certain Commandments, for the Tranſgreſſion whereof he puniſhes Man moſt ſeverely, and even to Eternity. Then certainly his Commands are ſuch, as with the help of his Grace may be accompliſh'd; otherwiſe he would neither be a wiſe Law-giver, nor a merciful Lord, did he puniſh Man eternally for Tranſgreſſing them. For no Body will ſay he is a wiſe and merciful Maſter, who commands his Servant things abſolutely impoſſible, as to ſtop the Sun's

Courſe, or to touch the Heavens with his Finger, and who, in caſe the Servant fails of doing it, does puniſh him with the utmoſt Severity, and condemn him to moſt exquiſite Torments. Now God is a moſt wiſe Law-giver, and a Maſter of an unlimited Bounty and Clemency; therefore he has commanded us nothing but what with his Grace we are able to perform: By conſequence the Doctrine of all our Innovators has no Foundation of Truth to build on, when they tell us (1) it is impoſſible, even with the Grace of God, to keep his Commandments.

My ſecond Argument. God's Goodneſs is beyond Meaſure. Nothing therefore ought to be admitted, that is repugnant to it. Now it were a Repugnancy to his ſovereign Goodneſs, before he had foreſeen a Man's Demerits, to deſtine and condemn him (2) to everlaſting Fire, and even to create him for

(1) Luther, de Libertate Chriſtiana. tom. 2 fol. 4.

(2) Luther de Serv. Arbitr. tom. 2. fol. 466. ſi placet tibi Deus indignos coronans, non debet etiam diſplicere immeritos damnads. Calvin Inſt. t. l. 3. c. 23. n. 6, 7.

that

that fatal end: Therefore there is no ſuch Decree of Reprobation in God; and the Doctrine of the *Calviniſts* is falſe and ought to be rejected together with the Sect that teaches it.

My third Argument. God is eſſentially True and Omnipotent, ſo that nothing is impoſſible to him. When therefore our Saviour, (who is alſo our God) ſaid at his laſt Supper to his Apoſtles (1) *This is my Body... This is my Blood*; either he ſaid not true, and therefore is not the Truth; or elſe he had not Power to change the Bread into his Body, and the Wine into his Blood, and by conſequence is not Omnipotent, nor the true God. But he is God, and therefore he is eſſentially True and Omnipotent. In effect, if God could create the World out of nothing, if our Saviour at the Marriage in *Cana* of *Galilee* could change Water into Wine, he can likewiſe change the Bread into his Body and the Wine into his Blood. Therefore the Doctrine of the *Calviniſts*, who deny the real Preſence of Chriſt's Body and Blood is manifeſtly falſe. We

(1) *St.* Matth. 26. 26. 28.

ſhall

ſhall bring hereafter ſeveral Examples of the like Nature.

Conſideration XV.

As I was ſearching to the bottom the Credenda of the Proteſtants, I met with ſeveral Paradoxes, altogether incredible, and inconſiſtent with common Senſe and Reaſon. For Example, the Abettors of the pretended Reformation among other Errors, teach (1) that all Sins are equal, and that no Sin is venial. Upon this I argued in the following manner. An idle Word is a Sin, for our Saviour tells us we muſt give an Account of it in the Day of Judgment. This Sin then, according to the Doctrine of our Innovators, muſt be of equal Enormity with any other Sin; as for Inſtance, with that of Blaſphemy, or Infidelity, or Apoſtacy. Now if the Sin of an idle Word be as enormous as any of thoſe, it deſerves an equal Puniſhment, and muſt be equally remiſſible or irremiſſible, and will as hardly find Pardon as any other Sin. But our

(1) Muſculus in Loc. comm. p. 28.

Saviour

Saviour has given a very different Information touching the Puniſhment and Pardon of Sins. *Whoſoever*, ſays he, (1) *is angry with his Brother without a Cauſe, ſhall be in danger of the Judgment: And whoſoever ſhall ſay to his Brother, Roca* [a Word of Contempt] *ſhall be in danger of the Council: But whoſoever ſhall ſay, thou Fool, ſhall be in danger of Hell fire.* Here we learn, that a Motion of Anger againſt a Neighbour, deſerves indeed ſome Puniſhment; but that a biting Word deſerves a Greater. Over and above that St. *John* (2) tells us, *There is a Sin unto Death*, from whence it follows, there is Sin, which is not unto Death, and by Conſequence that all Sins are not equal. Beſides, there is a Sin, which *ſhall not be forgiven* (3) *neither in this World, neither in the World to come*, for Inſtance, the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. All Sins therefore are not upon the Level, as to the Remiſſion of them, nor as to their Enormity. Infine, we read in the Proverbs (4) The *juſt Man falleth ſeven Times and riſeth up again; but the*

(1) St. Matth. 5. 22.
(2) 1 John 5. 16.
(3) St. Matth. 12. 32.
(4) Prov. 24. 16.

wicked

wicked ſhall fall into Miſchief. Some Sins there are by Conſequence which do not ſtrip us of habitual Juſtice, and there are others, which do: I infer, that all Sins are not equal; and by a neceſſary Conſequence, that that Sect or Religion ought to be rejected, which holds the contrary.

Conſideration XVI.

According to the ſame Sectaries, all good Works are (1) Sins: So that in their Principles, who will likewiſe have all Sins to be equal, every good Work muſt have in it ſelf the Enormity of all Sins whatſoever; by Conſequence, to Pray to God is a Crime of as black a Dye as Blaſphemy; to give an Alms to a poor Body is no better than robbing him of what he has; and to reſtore ill-gotten Goods to the right Owner, is as blameable as to keep them againſt his Will.

---

(1) Luther *in cap.* 3. Gal. *tom.* 5. *fol.* 363, Adverſus Execr. Ant. *tom.* 2. *fol.* 1100. Opus bonum optime factum, eſt veniale peccatum.

Con-

Conſideration XVII.

To preſs this Argument a little farther, I would gladly know what any of their Parſons would adviſe a Man to do, that ſhould ask him, whether or no he were obliged in the laſt Caſe abovemention'd to Reſtitution? If he Anſwers in the Affirmative; the unjuſt Poſſeſſor may ask him again, whether it be a good Work to reſtore anothers Goods? If he ſay, it is; the other may reply unto him; you hold that all good Works are Sins, and again, that all Sins are equal in themſelves; ſo that, whether I reſtore or retain my Neighbour's Goods, 'tis all one, as to the Guilt of Sin; I will therefore keep for my own Uſe and Benefit, what I hold to the Prejudice of my Neighbour. Upon a ſerious Examination of theſe two Points, I judged them to be equally impertinent and extravagant, as likewiſe the Sects that teach them.

Conſideration XVIII.

God is the ſoveraign Sanctity; whence we muſt infer, he is infinitely removed from

from all Sin, and hates it above all Things. If this be ſo, it is not his Will, nor his Command that we commit it, neither can it in any Manner be imputed to him. It follows then, that God is neither the *Author* nor the *Cauſe* of Sin, by willing, or ſuggeſting, or effecting, or commanding or working it; or by directing to it the impious Deſigns of the Wicked, as the *Calviniſts*, (1) and as *Luther* (2) himſelf would have us believe.

Conſideration XIX.

I read over and again with all poſſible attention, ſeveral Hiſtorians, as well

---

(1) *Calvin* Inſtit. *l.* 3 *cap.* 23. *n.* 7. Nec abſurdum videri debet quod dico, Deum non modo primi hominis Caſum, & in eo poſterorum ruinam prævidiſſe; ſed arbitrio quoq; ſuo diſpenſaſſe. Idem docet, *n.* 8, & 9. & de æternâ Dei Prædeſt. Opuſc. *p.* 906. & Beza Expoſ. de la Foi chez. Riv. 1560. *chap.* 2, & 3.

(2) Luther de Serv. Arbitr. *tom.* 2 *fol.* 429, dicimus Deum in nobis operari bona & mala, noſq; mera neceſſitate paſſiva ſubjici Dei operanti, *fol.* 434. Hic eſt fidei ſummus Gradus, credere [Deum] juſtum, qui ſua voluntate nos neceſſario damnabiles facit. *Similia habet. fol.* 445. 450, 461.

Political

Political Eccleſiaſtical, as likewiſe the Annals of a great many Nations, to find, if, before the fifteenth Century, there was any where mention made of the *Lutheran* or *Calviniſt* Doctrine, or of the other Sects of theſe our Days. For the ſame End, I likewiſe peruſed a great many ancient Writings and Records of the memorable Tranſactions that happen'd in each Century, but without finding the leaſt Mark or Foot-ſtep of them. This made me conclude that theſe Religions were all new, and by Conſequence far ſhort of being Apoſtolical; ſince they were not left to us by our Saviour, nor by his Apoſtles, but newly forged in the freakiſh Heads of their Authors; which gave me juſt Reaſon to reject them.

Conſideration XX.

It came to my Mind, how I read in my Youth the Book of a *Calviniſt* which he call'd a *Journal*, wherein he attempted to prove, by a long Muſter-roll of his own Invention, that, ever ſince our Saviour's Time, there were ſome in every Age, that held the Doctrine of *Luther* and *Calvin*. But his vain Attempt had no Influence upon me, for the following

lowing Reaſons. In the firſt Place, he will have the Perſons, he places in his Catalogue, to have held *Calvin's* Opinion, as well as *Luther's*. So that he dubs them *Lutheran-Calviniſts*. He might as well have attempted to make the Eaſt and Weſt Wind to blow from the ſame Quarter; for 'tis Matter of Fact that the Faith of *Luther* and that of *Calvin* are no more to be reconciled, than the *Lutherans* and the *Calviniſts*. As therefore none of our Sectaries will own himſelf to be compounded of a *Lutheran* and a *Calviniſt*, but pretends to be either a downright *Calviniſt*, or a downright *Lutheran*, ſo thoſe that fill the above-mention'd Catalogues cannot paſs for *Lutheran Calviniſts*. Neither is there the leaſt Colour of Reaſon, why the *Calviniſts* ſhould derive their Pedigree from that Liſt any more than the *Lutherans*; or the *Lutherans*, any more then the *Calviniſts*. Nay, the *Anabaptiſts* and all the late Spawn of Sectaries have as juſt Reaſons to put in their Claim to it. It cannot therefore be inferr'd from any Thing there related, that before *Luther's* or *Calvin's* Days, any Man held, believ'd or taught the Doctrine of *Luther* or *Calvin*, or of the *Lutherans* or *Calviniſts* of our Days, in its Purity, if I may ſay ſo, and

and full Extent. Secondly, this ſame Catalogue is wholly Chimerical. For the Perſons cited by this Author, are, according to his Computation, true *Lutheran-Calviniſts*, becauſe he finds in their Writings a Word or Two, or, at moſt, a Propoſition, which the *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* maintain at preſent. But, were this ſufficient, he ought to have put upon the Roll of *Lutheran Calviniſts*, *Mahomet*, *Judus Iſcariot*, *Arius* and all Arch-hereticks that ever rent the Church of Chriſt, ſince all and every one of them have in ſome Point or other held the ſame, as the *Lutherans* and the *Calviniſts*. *Mahomet* held, as they do, that there was but one God: *Arius*, that Councils might err, and that the Council of *Nice* effectually had err'd, in condemning him; ſo that at this rate of reaſoning *Mahomet* and *Arius* will be *Lutheran-Calviniſts*. 3dly, this Catalogue is abſolutely falſe, for as much as the Author has ſwell'd it with the Names of Perſons, who to their Death profeſs'd the Roman Catholick Faith, and among theſe of Popes, Cardinals, Archbiſhops, Biſhops, Religious Men, and even of ſome who by their Writings have aſſerted the Truth of the Roman Catholick Faith. And what's his Reaſon, for ſo doing?

Why

Why, truly none at all. He will prove St. *Gregory* to have been a *Lutheran Calviniſt*, from his reprehending the Faults of Prieſts; S. *Irenæus*, from his commending the Holy Scripture; St. *Polycarp*, from his holding the Apoſtolical Doctrine, and even *Bellarmin* to have been another, becauſe he complains of the Sins of bad *Catholicks*. Let the World judge, if theſe be Arguments to prove them to have been *Lutheran Calviniſts*. Do not Roman Catholicks and their Preachers ſtill inveign againſt the diſorders of Eccleſiaſticks? Do not they reproach ill Catholicks for their wicked Lives? Do not they recommend the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and the Doctrine of the Apoſtles? Will this transform them into *Lutheran Calviniſts*? Not at all.

Conſideration XXI.

In running through all the Hereſies of paſt Ages, I made for my ſelf an Hiſtorical Abſtract incomparably better than this abſurd Catalogue. For I found that well nigh all the Articles of Faith, which *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* maintain, were formerly taught by ſome other Arch-hereticks, and condemn'd by the

the Church; I do not mean, that any of them taught all theſe Articles in the manner they are taught by *Luther* and *Calvin*, (for there never was any ſuch) but that ſome Arch-hereticks taught ſome of them, and that in different Ages. But this can never be an Argument with Men of Senſe, that the *Lutheran* or *Calviniſt* Doctrine had a Being before *Luther* or *Calvin*. It only proves (and this indeed by a fair Conſequence) that the Religion broach'd by *Luther* and *Calvin* is a Complication of divers ancient condemn'd Hereſies, ſomewhat reſembling the Beggars Coat, which he finds among the Brokers made up of party-colour'd Rags, and Patches with ſome new Shreds of Cloth, of a Colour and Quality altogether diſproportion'd.

Conſideration XXII.

Next I took into Conſideration the true Marks of the Church of Chriſt, *viz.* that it is *One*, *Holy*, *Catholick*, and *Apoſtolical*. But not one of them could I find in the reform'd, or to give it its proper Name, the deform'd Church. As for *Unity*, there's nothing of it; for their Adherents are at Variance upon ſeveral

of

of the chief Articles of Faith; and even those of the ſame Denomination are run into Sentiments and Opinions directly oppoſite. They are no leſs Strangers to *Holineſs*. which, as *David* (1) obſerves, directs us to *flee from evil, and do the Thing that is good*, whereas theſe Religions are ſo far from teaching us to decline Evil by the Obſervance of God's Commandments; that on the contrary they declare it a Thing impoſſible to obſerve them: And inſtead of exhorting us to well-doing, they teach us that good Works (2) are no ways helpful toward the gaining of Salvation, and, what is yet worſe, they ſay that good Works (3) are downright Sins. Beſides, that they cannot name ſo much as one Perſon of Sanctity that was of their Religion. They are equally at a Loſs how to prove their Church *Catholick* or *Univerſal*; for their Faith has never been ſpread throughout

(1) Pſal. 37. 27.

(2) Luther de Servo Arbitr. *tom.* 2. *fol.* 453. ſi bonum operarentur propter regnum obtinendum, nunquam obtinerent.

(3) Luth. Adv. Execra. Antich. *tom.* 2 *fol.* 110. In *cap.* 3. ad Gal. *tom.* 5. *fol.* 363, Confit. Ratio. *tom.* 2. *fol.* 26. De votis *fol.* 281.

the

the World, as the Roman has, according to that of the Apoſtle, (1) *Their ſound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the ends of the World.* Add to this, that their Religion cannot be traced back through every Age; for before the Year 1517, it was no where ſpoken of. And at this Day, it is not known over all the World. it has only neſtled in ſome few Provinces of *Europe*, which is the ſmalleſt Part of the Univerſe, compared with *Africa*, *Aſia*, and *America*, where it is ſo far from being eſtabliſh'd, that it is not ſo much as mention'd, excepting a few Corners, where the Sectaries have gain'd a Settlement upon no other Account but that of Commerce. Infine, it cannot be *Apoſtolical*, by Reaſon that it was not founded by the Apoſtles, nor is able to ſhew a continual Succeſſion of its Paſtors or its Doctrine from thoſe firſt Planters of the Church of Chriſt. On the other ſide, all theſe Marks are ſhew'd by all Manner of Proofs to be inherent in the Roman Catholick Church. So that I had all the Reaſon in the World to prefer it before any of the Reſt.

(1) Rom. 10. 18.

Conſi-

Conſideration XXIII.

Then I began to conſider, how ſo many different Nations, Provinces and whole Kingdoms turn'd from Heatheniſm to Chriſtianity: I found it was done after an admirable Manner, and that ſuch a Converſion could never have been effected without the Divine Power and Aſſiſtance, by Reaſon of the many Obſtacles on the Part of powerful Emperors, Kings and Tyrants, whoſe Cruelty was to be undergone, and Obſtinacy to be ſurmounted; and chiefly by Reaſon that the Chriſtian Faith recommended to them Things contrary to Fleſh and Blood and to the Maxims of the World, and propoſed to their Belief ſublime and hidden Myſteries, which the Light of Nature alone was not able to comprehend; and all this by Preachers deſtitute of all human Support. Upon a ſerious Contemplation of theſe Prodigious Converſions, I began to think what that Faith and Religion was, and I ſoon diſcover'd it to be the Roman Catholick Apoſtolick, which wrought theſe Wonders by Men of an Apoſtolical Spirit, ſent by the chief Biſhops to preach the Goſpel. Our very

very Adverſaries will confeſs, that during the five firſt Ages, there was no other Religion to which Nations were converted. The ſixth Age ſaw *England* converted by St. *Auguſtin* a Monk, ſent thither by St. *Gregory* Pope. In the ſeventh *Germany* embraced the Faith by the Preaching of St. *Boniface*, who receiv'd his Miſſion from Pope *Gregory* III. St. *Cyril* and St, *Methodius* converted *Moravia* In the Eighth. In the ninth *Hungary* and *Poland* were converted by St. *Adelbert*, St. *Philigrin* and others. In the tenth *Bohemia*, and *Muſcovy*; and long before this *Freezland* by St. *Boniface* and St. *Willebrod*. In the eleventh *Pomerania* by St. *Bruno*. In the twelfth *Livonia* by St. *Meinard*, and *Sweden* by *Nicholas Breakſpear*, who was afterwards advanc'd to the See of *Rome*; In the two laſt Ages a vaſt number of Provinces as well in the Eaſt as Weſt Indies, and a far greater Tract of Land, than all *Europe* together, have been brought to the Chriſtian Faith, which is no other than the Roman Catholick, and the Number of Converts there is daily on the Increaſe. But after the ſtricteſt Search I have been able to make, I have not found ſo much as one ſingle Pagan Nation, that has embraced

Lutheraniſm or *Calviniſm*, or any of our new Sects. All their Proſelites, as far as I can learn, are looſe and debauched Catholicks, who have not, in all Appearance, any other Motive for leaping the Pale of the Roman Catholick Church, then ſenſual Pleaſures and worldly Satisfactions. From theſe Premiſes the moſt rational Concluſion I was able to draw, was that the Roman Catholick Apoſtolick Religion ought to be choſen before any of our new-broach'd Sects.

Conſideration XXIV.

The foregoing Conſideration carried me on to this farther Remark: That God beſtow'd on all the Apoſtles, and on all Apoſtolical Men, whom in former Ages he choſe and ſent for the Converſion of Countries and Nations, the Gift of extraordinary Miracles, according to that Promiſe recorded by St. *Matthew* (1) *Go*, ſaid our Saviour to his Diſciples, *preach... heal the ſick, cleanſe the Lepers, raiſe the Dead, caſt out Devils.* Of which Promiſe we read the Accompliſhment in St. *Mark*'s laſt Words, *And they went*

(1) Chap. 10. 7, 8.

forth,

forth, and preach'd every where, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with ſigns following.

The Maſter Builders of our modern Sects, may, as long as they pleaſe, boaſt their Miſſion from God for the reforming of his Church; they have never yet produced any of the aforeſaid Signs, nor wrought a Miracle in Confirmation of their Doctrine or their Miſſion, not ſo much as the Cure of a lame Dog, as a certain Author tells them. How then could I believe that God had ſent them, eſpecially ſince our Saviour has forewarn'd us (1) to *Beware of falſe Prophets, which come in Sheep's cloathing*, [having always in their Mouths the HOLY SCRIPTURE and the GOSPEL] *but inwardly they are ravening Wolves.* Which is yet more evident, from their claſhing with one another, and preaching inconſiſtent Doctrines, as *Luther* and *Calvin* did. It being impoſſible for both of them to have taught the Truth, and by conſequence to have receiv'd from God a Commiſſion to reform his Church, ſince the one gives no better Proof, than the other of his Commiſſion. For which

(1) Matth. 7. 15.

Reaſon I judged, that neither of them was worthy to be believ'd.

Conſideration XXV.

I likewiſe took a View of the Lives and Manners of theſe firſt Reformers, and I compared them with thoſe Apoſtolical Men, who from Paganiſm brought the Gentiles to the Roman Catholick Faith. And there appear'd as great a Diſproportion betwixt them, as there is betwixt Light and Darkneſs, betwixt Heaven and Earth. Thoſe Apoſtolical Men were Perſons of eminent Devotion, were cloſely united to God, indued with many ſingular Virtues, were Pious, Sober, Humble and Chaſt, they deſpied the Riches of the World, fled from Pleaſures, and had no other View than God's Glory in the Salvation of Souls. As appears from the Hiſtory of their Lives, and from their Writings On the contrary, theſe pretended Reformers were Slaves to their Bellies, and to carnal Pleaſures, Apoſtates, Perjurers, Vow-breakers, Proud and Impious, and broach'd Doctrines that flatter'd Senſe to a moſt ſhameful Degree. Their Lives and Writings bear Witneſs to this Charge: What Mortal was ever more

ſwell'd

ſwell'd with Pride and Arrogance and Preſumption than *Luther* (1) and *Calvin* (2) who preferr'd themſelves to all Antiquity, and their Senſe of the Holy Scriptures to that of all the Saints and Fathers of God's Church? What Author has ever ſent abroad Books ſo beaſtly (3) and full of Filth as *Luther*? Or ſo Impious and Blaſphemous (4) as *Calvin?* They have both writ in ſuch a manner, that their very Followers are now aſhamed of them.

Conſideration XXVI.

Another powerful Inducement to the Roman Catholick Religion was this, that even in our Days great Numbers, fir'd with a Zeal of Souls, undervaluing the Conveniencies of Life, leaving Friends and Relations, renouncing the Ho-

---

(1) Luther cont. Reg. Angliæ. *tom.* 2. *fol.* 344. 347 Reſp. ad Reg. Angl *fol.* 498. Adverſ. Execrab. *fol.* 93. 109. Ad Epiſc. *fol.* 305.

(2) Calvin Tract. de Reform. Eccl. Opuſc. *p.* 781. Epiſc. ad Melan. *p.* 108.

(3) Adver. Pap. 107 *fol.* 451. Serm. de Matr. *t.* 5. *fol.* 119. In 1 Cor 7 *tom.* 5. *fol.* 111, 112.

(4) Inſtit. *l.* 1. *c.* 14. *n.* 3. in cap. 17. Jo. *v.* 12. In. *c.* 3. ad Gal. Inſtit. *l.* 1. *c.* 13. *n.* 9. 23, 24. *l.* 2 *c.* 16. *n.* 12, *l.* 4. *c.* 14. *n.* 3.

nours, Dignities and Advantages, of which they are in Poſſeſſion or in a reaſonable Expectation, go chearfully in queſt of People to the fartheſt Corners of the Earth, that they may preach to them the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, inſtruct them in the Principles of Faith, and convert them to Chriſtianity, without any Apprehenſion of the Dangers incident to ſuch long Voyages, of the Cruelty of Tyrants, or of Death it ſelf, which they have reaſon to expect from the Malice of a barbarous People; and with Aſſurance they may be able to ſay, as St. *Paul* did (1) *I am in labours more abundant, in ſtripes above meaſure, in priſons more frequent, in deaths oft.* But we never find the like among the Preachers of the other Religions. And this obliged me to conclude, that thoſe were full, theſe empty of the Spirits of God: For (2) *Greater love hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends.*

Conſideration XXVII.

Again, I admired to ſee, among the Roman Catholicks, ſo many Perſons, who might live eaſy in the World, by

(1) 2 Cor. 11. 23. (2) John 15. 13.

reaſon

reaſon of their plentiful Eſtates, and all the Conveniencies that are uſed to wait upon illuſtrious Families, not only young Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, but many others deſcended of Barons, Counts, Marqueſſes and Princes; I ſay, to ſee theſe trample on all the Delights and Pleaſures of the World, and with ſuch chearful Hearts to preſs through a Thouſand Obſtacles, and immure themſelves in auſtere and poor Cloiſters, and this upon no other Motive, than the Love of God, and the ſecuring of their Salvation. Can any of the new Religions ſhew me a Parallel to this? Or rather, don't they all run directly Counter? Over and above, that, among their Miniſters, you will ſcarce find one of noble Extraction, or of any conſiderable Family above the Vulgar. I ſay not this as if I pretended that God makes any Diſtinction of Perſons, I know very well that our bleſſed Saviour made Choice of Simple Ignorant Fiſher-men for his Apoſtles: I only infer, that for Chriſtians ſo couragiouſly to leave the World, as Religious Men and Women do in the Roman Church, they muſt certainly be influenced by an extraordinary Grace of God, and animated with

the true Faith, in which ſuch ſingular Graces are beſtowed upon them.

Conſideration XXVIII.

I remember that in my Youth I heard two *Lutheran* Miniſters diſcourſing concerning a young Man of an admirable Diſpoſition, with whom I was very well acquainted. If I be not miſtaken, ſaid one of the Miniſters to the other, this young Man will never Marry. The other made anſwer: He'll do very well, for Continency and Celibacy is a great Gift, and a ſingular Grace of God. I, who was then very young and a *Lutheran* too, being amazed at this Anſwer, began thus to reaſon the Matter with my ſelf. Since our Miniſters ſtyle themſelves Reformers of the Church, and Preachers of the pure Goſpel, and own that Continency and Celibacy is a great Gift and a ſingular Grace of God; how comes it to paſs, that God beſtows not this ſingular Grace on them? For you'll ſeldom or never find that the Miniſters live unmarried. And how chances it, that this Gift and Grace is beſtow'd on ſo many Papiſts, whom we call Idolaters? For among them there are infinite Numbers of religious Men and Women

and

and of Eccleſiaſticks, who paſs their Lives in a ſtrict Obſervance of Continency and Chaſtity. Their Religion muſt certainly be more acceptable to God, becauſe no Man can be (1) Chaſt, unleſs God give the Grace. When I came to riper Years, I very frequently had this in my Thoughts; and it was one of the Motives that inclined me to the Roman Catholick Faith.

Conſideration XXIX.

I read ſeveral Authors, who had written againſt the Roman Catholick Religion, and I could not but take Notice, how in all their Arguments they labour to prove, what Catholicks do not deny, but on the contrary allow without any Difficulty. But they hardly touch upon thoſe Points which Catholicks hold for Articles of Faith. For Inſtance, they will bring you a Multitude of Texts from Scripture, to prove that God only is to be ador'd, and honour'd with divine Worſhip: When Catholicks are ſo far from denying it, that they believe it to be a Sin of Idolatry to pay divine Worſhip to any Creature whatever.

(1) Wiſdom 8. 21.

Again they cite many Places in Scripture, which make honourable mention of Marriage. But what's all this to the purpoſe? Catholicks condemn not Marriage; ſo far from it, that they put it in the Number of Sacraments. Their Doctrine in this particular, amounts to no more than what St. *Paul* hns taught them (1) that *He that giveth his Virgin in Marriage, doth well; but he that giveth her not in Marriage, doth better.* Again, they ſpeak much of our Saviour's Merits, and of the Satisfaction he has offer'd for our Sins. But what then? Do not Catholicks likewiſe teach that our Saviour's Merits are of infinite Value, and that his Satisfaction ſuffices for the Sins of the whole World? Muſt this hinder them from giving Ear to the Advice of St. *Peter* (2) *Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election ſure by good works,* (as the Latin Verſion has it) or to that of St. *Paul* (3) *If ſo be that we ſuffer with him, that we may be alſo glorified with him.* The Proteſtants give us great Encomiums of Faith. And ſo do the Catholicks; but may

(1) 1 Cor. 7. 38. (2) 2 Epiſ. 1. 10.
(3) Rom. 8. 17.

they

they not believe St. *James*, when he ſays, (1) *Ye ſee then, how that by works a Man is juſtified, and not by Faith only*: Or St. *Paul*, when he pronounces of himſelf (2) *Though I have all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing?* Infine, our Adverſaries inveigh moſt bitterly againſt the diſſolute Lives of ſome of the Clergy. But how does this better their Cauſe? Catholicks deteſt it, as much as they: But then they admire in the Generality of them that Angelical Chaſtity which they preſerve both in Body and Soul.

Conſideration XXX.

I obſerv'd not only in theſe Authors, but liikewiſe in the Sermons and Diſcourſes, both Publick and Private, of other Miniſters, that their main Talent lay in ſlandering and blackning the Roman Catholick Church. And this alone was enough to perſwade me, they were but ill provided with Arguments againſt her. For when Men in the Heat of their Diſputes fling Dirt at their Adverſaries, 'tis a certain Sign their Arguments want an Edge. Over and above

(1) James 2. 24. (2) 1 Cor. 13. 2.

that

that Calumnies are always made up of Lies and Forgeries. And how is it poſſible by bare-fac'd Lies to come at Truth? Yet this is the very Caſe of the Proteſtants. For Inſtance, they will have the World to believe, that Catholicks adore the Saints; that they take the Pope for a God, that they put their Hope and Confidence more in their own Merits and in thoſe of the Saints, than in the Merits of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; and a Thouſand other Stories, without any Foundation, but pure Malice to ſupport them. Now I could not think it rational to ground my Faith upon palpable Lies and Calumnies; and for that reaſon I reſolv'd to inform my ſelf of the Truth of Things; and having happily found it, I rejected all theſe new Sects as ſo many Impoſtures.

Conſideration XXXI.

I remember, that being once preſent in my Youth, at a Diſpute of School Divinity, which was held among the *Calviniſts*, one of the Audience, more knowing than the reſt, propoſed before all the Company in the Perſon of a Catholick, an Argument, which ſo gravell'd the Profeſſor, that it quite ſilenc'd him

him for a Time. Then to get clear of it, as well as he could, he told us, that, being formerly in *England*, he had propoſed the ſame difficulty to one of their Doctors, who had no other Anſwer to give him than that no pertinent Reſolution could be made to the Argument, and by conſequence that in this Point no direct Anſwer was to be given to Catholicks, but the only way was to avoid the Force and Dint of it, by ſome logical Evaſion. This Anſwer did not a little ſcandalize me: For it is not by Quirks and Shuffles that Satisfaction can be given to any Argument, nor that the Knowledge of any Truth can be acquired. So that I judged the Proteſtants took not much to Heart the Truth of Matters, as to Articles of Faith.

Conſideration XXXII.

I remark'd likewiſe another particular, which gave me a moſt violent Preſumption of the Falſity of all the Sects that have ſeparated from the Roman Catholick Church. Tho' they continually refer Catholicks to the Holy Scripture; as for themſelves, they treat it as they think fit. Sometimes they reject whole Books of it, at other times they dreſs it

out

out in a falſe (1) Tranſlation, and all of them expound it to their own Fancies, and make it chime to the Suggeſtions of their private Spirits. On the contrary, the Roman Catholicks have all the ſame Verſion, all make uſe of the ſame Books, which the Church has uſed for above thirteen hundred Years; and they underſtand them not according to their own private Lights, but according to the Senſe of the Ancient Fathers, and of the univerſal Church, to which our bleſſed Saviour refers us in thoſe Words, (2) *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen and a Publican.*

Conſideration XXXIII.

That nothing might paſs me without being examin'd, I attentively peruſed *Luther*'s little Catechiſm, which the *Lutherans* of *Hungary* make uſe of to this Day. I carefully compared it with the Catechiſm of the ſame *Luther* printed at *Wittemberg* in 1567. And I found that in ſeveral Articles, it differ'd as much as could be from the firſt Edition of the ſame

(1) *Concerning falſe Tranſlations in the* Engliſh *Bible, ſee a Book call'd,* The true Church of Chriſt. *Part* 1. p. 137.

(2) Matth. 18. 17.

Cate-

Catechiſm, printed at *Wittemberg*. I ſhould never have imagin'd ſo great an Alteration; had I not remark'd how the pretended Reformers of our Days after, as the Fancy takes them, the Articles of their Religion; ſo that ſome are held in ſome Countries, which are denied in others; ſome ſtifled in this Age, which were broach'd in the laſt; and others broach'd in this, which were not ſo much as dream'd of in the laſt. If any Man queſtions what I ſay concerning theſe two Catechiſms, I deſire he would compare them; which may eaſily be done, ſince this Catechiſm of *Wittemberg* was reprinted in 1701 at *Tirnau* in *Hungary*. On the contrary in my Travels through ſeveral Catholick Provinces, I found no Difference among them, as to Articles of Faith, but rather an exact Conformity.

Conſideration XXXIV.

Having therefore met with ſo unaccountable a Variety, as to Matters of Faith, among thoſe that would be thought to follow the *Augsbourg* Confeſſion, I reſolv'd to read it with all poſſible Attention. I procured ſeveral Editions and thoſe of different Times. But I found them ſo alter'd and inconſiſtent, that

that I was not able to diſcover which of them was the Genuine; and no Wonder, ſince the very Profeſſors of *Lutheran* Univerſities are at Variance about the Matter. I labour'd under this uncertainty, till I had the good Fortune, when at *Vienna*, to be admitted one Day with a great many more into the Emperor's Library. There among other Rarities, his Imperial Majeſty's Library-keeper ſhew'd us the very Original of that Confeſſion, which *Melanchthon*, in 1530, preſented to *Charles* V. at the Diet of *Augsbourg*. 'Tis ſo different from the other Editions, that, did they not bear the Title, no Man would take them for the *Confeſſion of Augsbourg*. From whence I infer that the Religion of our *Lutherans* is not that of the *Augsbourg* Confeſſion, but very different from it, and by Conſequence, not worthy to be regarded. But why was I not contented at leaſt with the Original itſelf? Becauſe it contained a great many Lies and palpable Contradictions, as Cardinal *Pazman* hath clearly proved in his Learned Work, called *Kaſauz* from *page* 415. to 440.

Con-

Conſideration XXXV.

Having very frequently Meditated on thoſe Words of our Saviour, (1) *Enter ye in at the ſtrait Gate, for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat, becauſe ſtrait is the Gate and narrow is the Way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* And (2) *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate.* I ſay, having very frequently conſidered theſe Words, I eaſily perceiv'd the Religions, contrary to that of the Roman Catholicks, were not this ſtrait Gate which leadeth unto Life; but that they were the wide Gate that leadeth to Deſtruction. For according to their Doctrine (3) there goes no more to the Gaining of eternal Life, than believing ones ſelf predeſtin'd to Glory, and that he ſhall be ſaved. Now certainly this Doctrine can never be reconciled with that of our bleſſed Saviour and his Apoſtles. For, when one ask'd Jeſus Chriſt, (4) *Good Maſter, what good Things ſhall I*

(1) Matth. 7. 13. 14. (2) Luke 13. 24.
(3) Calv. Inſtit. *l.* 3. *c.* 2. *n.* 16 & 24. Antid. Conc. Trid. in Seſſ. 6. *cap.* 13. 14. Beza Expoſ. de la Foy ch. 8. conc. 1.
(4) Matth. 19. 16. 17.

do,

do, that I may have eternal Life? He anſwer'd, *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.* Whereas our Sectaries, had the Queſtion been put to them, would not have ſaid, if thou ſhilt enter into Life keep the Commandments, for this they judge impoſſible; but rather, if thou wilt enter into Life, only believe that Jeſus Chriſt has fulfill'd for thee the Commandments of God the Father. The *Jews* touch'd with St. *Peter*'s Sermon, ask'd, *What ſhall we do?* (1) And St. *Peter* anſwer'd, *do Penance*, as our Saviour himſelf had ſaid before (2) *Except ye do Penance, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* And St. *Peter* again (3) *Do Penance therefore and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out.* In the ſame Manner did St. *John* the Baptiſt begin his Preaching (4) *Do Penance.* —— *Bring forth therefore worthy fruits of Penance.* But what would our new Goſpellers anſwer, were they ask'd by any one, whether, and in what manner Penance ought to be done? They would tell him; *only believe thy Sins are pardon'd thee, through the Merits of Jeſus Chriſt, and that's ſufficient.* But ſhould I put this other

(1) Acts 2. 37. 38. (2) Luke 13. 3.
(3) Acts 3. 19. (4) Matth. 3. 2. & 8.

Queſtion

Queſtion to them, am I obliged to forgive my Enemy the Injuries he has done me, if I would have God to forgive me my Sins? What would they anſwer then? Nothing elſe I ſuppoſe, but that it is enough for me to believe that my Sins are forgiven. And yet our Saviour has declared (1) *If ye forgive Men their treſpaſſes, your Heavenly Father will alſo forgive you: But if ye forgive not Men their treſpaſſes, neither will your Father forgive your treſpaſſes.* I ask farther, whether by good Works I may merit eternal Life? They will anſwer me in the Negative, and that it is Faith alone that gains it. Yet St. *Peter* (2) exhorts us *by good Works to make our Calling and Election ſure.* And St. *Paul* tells us (3) that God *will render to every Man according to his Deeds— Glory, Honour and Peace, to every Man that worketh Good.* And (4) that *every Man ſhall receive his own Reward, according to his own Labour.* Another Queſtion may be, whether I can reſcue my ſelf from the Puniſhment due to my Sins, by giving Alms? Since our Saviour ſays, (5) *Give Alms of ſuch Things as you have: And behold, all Things are*

(1) Matth. 6. 14. 15. (2) 2 Pet. 1. 10.
(3) Rom. 2. 6. 10. (4) 1 Cor. 3. 8.
(5) Luke 11. 41.

clean

clean unto you. And the Prophet *Daniel* [1] *Break off thy Sins by Alms, and thy Iniquities by ſhewing Mercy to the poor.* They'll tell me, purſuant to their groundleſs Syſtem, that it is not neceſſary, only believe that our Saviour has ſatisfied for you, and you'll be without Spot or blemiſh: Only believe that Jeſus Chriſt died for you, and you'll get clear of your Sins. Faith alone will do your Work. Laſtly, I deſire to know, what thoſe Sins are which damn a Soul and exclude it from the Glory of Heaven. St. *Paul* would anſwer, [2] *Be not deceiv'd; neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God.* But our Reformers with their Patriarch *Luther* [3] will aſſure me, *that no Sin, but Incredulity, damns a Man.* I appeal to the common Senſe and Reaſon of Mankind, if this be not a new, and

[1] Dan. 4. 27. [2] 1 Cor 6. 9. 10.

[3.] Baptizatus etiam volens non poteſt perdere ſalutem ſuam quantiſcunq; peccatis, niſi nolit credere: Nulla enim peccata eum poſſunt damnere, niſi ſola Incredulitas, Cap. Bab. *tom.* 2 *fol.* 74. *Similia docet*, contra Cathar. *tom.* 2. *fol.* 156. & Poſtilla in Dom. 8. poſt Trin.

wide

vide and ſpacious Way: And conſe-quently a Way, by which never any Man vent to Heaven.

Conſideration XXXVI.

On Occaſion of this Controverſy, *viz.* *whether Faith alone will ſuffice to ſave a Man*; for the Support of which Principle *Luther* ſacrilegiouſly corrupted that Text of St. *Paul* [1] *We conclude that a Man is juſtified by Faith*, and read *by Faith alone*; I began to ſuſpect the Proteſtants might uſe the like Deceit in other Texts of Scripture. I therefore reſolved to inform my ſelf as to this Particular, and I ſoon found there was but too much Reaſon for my Suſpicion. The ſame *Luther*, coming to that Text of St. *Peter*, cited in a foregoing Conſideration [2] *Give diligence by good Works to make your Calling and Election ſure*, entirely omits in his Tranſlation thoſe Words, *By good Works*, becauſe they evidently condemn his Error, concerning the Uſeleſſneſs of good Works in order to Salvation. We read in St. *Matthew* [3] and St. *Mark*, [4] *Hoc eſt Corpus meum, This is my Body*: But to ſhut out

[1] Rom. 3. 38. [2] 2 Pet. 1. 10.
[3] Matth. 26. 26. [4] Mark 14. 22.

of

of the Euchariſt the real Preſence of Chriſt's Body, the Generality of the *Calviniſts* read it thus: *Hic eſt Corpus meum, Here is my Body.* For the ſame Reaſon, inſtead of thoſe Words in St. *John* [1] *I am the living Bread, which came down from Heaven*, they have tranſlated, *I am the Life-giving Bread*, that the Text might the more eaſily be underſtood of common Bread. The Roman Catholicks prove the Sacrament of Penance, not only from St. *James*'s Epiſtle, *ch.* 5. 16. *Confeſs your Faults one to another, Confitemini ergo alterutrum peccata veſtra:* But alſo very clearly from St. *Matth.* 16. 19, and St. *John* 20. 23. The Reformers to get clear of ſacramental Confeſſion, inſtead of ſaying with St. *James, Confitemini ergo alterutrum peccata veſtra*, ſay, *Confitemini peccata veſtra ad invicem. Confeſs the Sins you have committed againſt each other.* St. *Paul* [2] declares *Marriage honourable in all, Honorabile connubium in omnibus.* The Reformers tranſlate it, *Marriage honourable among all, Honorabile connubium inter omnes*, to give a Sanction to the Marriages of Prieſts. Jeſus Chriſt ſays [3] *Come ye*

[1] John 6. 51. [2] Heb. 13. 3.
[3] Matth. 25. 34. 35.

bleſſed

bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was Hungry, and ye gave me Meat, I was Thirſty, and ye gave me drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me in, &c. Luther in his Tranſlation omits FOR; becauſe he knew that Catholicks proved from hence good Works to be Meritorious of eternal Life. I omit a great many other Forgeries of the like Nature; which convinc'd me that the Heads of all our new Sects taught not the Way of God in Truth, but that they tortured the Holy Scripture to make it ſpeak their own private Senſe, and clip'd it, as they thought convenient. How therefore could I think it Prudence to adhere to their Religion?

Conſideration XXXVII.

After this, I made a kind of Scrutiny, towards a Diſcovery of the true Church of Jeſus Chriſt, from thoſe that falſely pretend to be ſo: And I did it in this manner. There is ſomewhere in the Chriſtian World a true Church of Jeſus Chriſt. All Religions and Sects whatever admit this Propoſition, excepting thoſe Hereticks who are called *Expectants*. If there be a true Church of Jeſus Chriſt,

it

it muſt have been founded by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf; and, by conſequence, according to the Principles of Wiſdom, ſince her Founder is the Eternal Wiſdom it ſelf. Now if this Church was *wiſely* founded, ſhe was founded in ſuch a manner, as to be ſure of a conſtant and perpetual Being, purſuant to that Maxim of our Saviour [1] *Whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wiſe Man which built his Houſe upon a Rock: and the Rain deſcended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that Houſe; and it fell not, for it was founded on a Rock.* And it is of this Houſe our Saviour ſpeaks, when he ſays [2] *Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* If ſhe ſtands on ſo firm a Foundation, it is not poſſible for her to fail, or fall either by the Rains of Afflictions, or by the Torrents of Perſecutions, or by the Winds of Hereſies; otherwiſe we muſt ſay, it was built on a Sand, and not on a Rock: And if it cannot fail, it muſt always have been viſible. Beſides, that it would have been to no purpoſe for our Saviour to

[1] Matth. 7. 24. 25. [2] Matth. 16. 18.

have given this Rule to his Faithful: (1) *Tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen Man and a Publican.* For how can the Faithful tell or propoſe a thing to a Church inviſible and no where to be found? If ſhe was viſible to all the Faithful, her Limits muſt have been extended by the Apoſtles after the Aſcenſion of Jeſus Chriſt, purſuant to thoſe Orders he gave them. (2) *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Goſpel to every Creature.* Which they faithfully complied withal, as we learn from the ſame Evangeliſt. (3) *And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with ſigns following.* Now ſince the Apoſtles carried the Faith on all ſides, and that the Truth was preach'd through all the World, the Church was certainly *Univerſal*, that is to ſay, *Catholick*; and if Univerſal, ſhe was likewiſe *One.* For which Reaſon we are told (4) *There ſhall be one fold* (5) *one body*; (6) *one body and one Spirit.* And, if the Church be one Body and one Spirit, ſhe ought

(1) Matth. 18. 17. (2) Mark 16. 15.
(3) Ibid. 20. (4) John 10. 16.
(5) Rom. 12. 4. (6) Epheſ. 4. 4.

to have one Head, and therefore it was fit, that Jeſus Chriſt, when he aſcended to Heaven, ſhould leave ſome one of his Apoſtles, to be the viſible Head of this Church. And who was this, but St. *Peter*, to whom our Saviour ſaid (1) *Thou art Simon the Son of Jona: Thou ſhalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a Rock:* And afterwards (2) *Feed my Lambs.* ---- *Feed my ſheep:* And in another place (3) *And I ſay alſo unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church— And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Peter* therefore was conſtituted the Head of the viſible Church founded by Jeſus Chriſt. And becauſe *Peter* was not to live for ever, whereas the Church was to continue to the World's end, according to that Promiſe of our Saviour, (4) *Behold I am with you all days even unto the end of the World*; he was to have Succeſſors in his unlimited paſtoral Care and in Chriſtian Doctrine, and theſe were likewiſe to have theirs. From whence it follows, that this continual Succeſſion of Paſtors and Doctrine is annexed to

(1) John 1. 42. (2) John 21. 15, 16, 17.
(3) Matth. 16. 18, 19. (4) Matth. 28. 20.

the

the true Church of Jeſus Chriſt. But becauſe *Peter* and his Succeſſors could not Preach in Perſon to all the World, they were to have Fellow Labourers in this ſacred Miniſtry; for which Reaſon Chriſt (1) *gave* to his Church, *ſome, Apoſtles: and ſome, Prophets: and ſome, Evangeliſts: and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt: till we come in the unity of the Faith.— unto a perfect Man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt: That we henceforth be no more Children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the ſlight of Men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* Infine, ſince Jeſus Chriſt has call'd us to his Church for that ſame End, which St. *Paul* recommends to us in the ſame Chapter (2) *Put on the new Man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*, the Church of Jeſus Chriſt muſt be *Holy*, that is to ſay, ſhe muſt, by her Doctrine, encourage Holineſs, and among her Children have ſome at leaſt remarkable for Holineſs. But where ſhall we find this Church foun-

(1) Epheſ. 4. 11, 12, 13, 14. (2) Ibid. 24.

ded by our Saviour, and by his Apoſtles ſpread over all the World, if it be not the Roman Catholick? For this it was, that the Holy Apoſtles *Peter* and *Paul* founded and enlarged at *Rome*. The Faith of *Rome* was the ſame with that of the Apoſtles, and of St. *Paul* in particular, who writing to the Romans (1) ſays that their Faith was his: Therefore ſhe was *Apoſtolical*. This ſame Faith, as he teſtifies in the ſame Chapter (2) was preach'd throughout the World; therefore ſhe was *Catholick* or Univerſal. She was built upon a Rock, therefore ſhe cannot fail: She has always been, and is to this day *viſible*. All Nations upon leaving Paganiſm came into her Pale. 'Tis ſhe, that has had a continual Succeſſion of chief Paſtors from St. *Peter* to *Clement* XI. the preſent Pope. In all Parts of the Earth ſhe holds exactly the ſame Rule of Faith, therefore ſhe is *one*. She has had an infinite Number of Saints of both Sexes, of Martyrs, of Confeſſors, and of Virgins. She teaches her Children the way of Holineſs, to fly from Evil, and to do Good, ſhe is therefore *Holy*; by conſequence ſhe inherits

(1) Rom. 1. 12. (2) Ibid. 8.

the

the true Faith, and Religion, and is the true Church of Jeſus Chriſt; if ſhe is the true, I infer ſhe is the only Church, and that no other has a title to our Obedience.

Conſideration XXXVIII.

Let it farther be conſider'd that all the Religions which are at Variance with the Roman Catholick, in general and in particular, are likewiſe, as to Doctrine and Points of Faith, at Variance among themſelves. They cannot then be *one* Church. They were not preach'd by the Apoſtles, but were trump'd up a great many Ages after them; therefore they are not *Apoſtolical*. They have not obtain'd over all the World, but only in a few Provinces, and thoſe in *Europe* only; they cannot therefore paſs for the *Catholick* or *Univerſal* Church: They cannot trace the Succeſſion of their Paſtors and their Doctrine any higher, than to *Luther* and *Calvin*; by conſequence they have not from the Apoſtles a continual Succeſſion of their Miniſtry or their Doctrine. They cannot name one Saint, who has been their Follower: They do not teach us to fly from Evil, and to do Good; but, on the contrary, they main-

tain, that this is impoſſible and nothing to the purpoſe. How then can they be reputed a *Holy Church*? And ſince they have none of the Marks of the true Church of Chriſt, it follows, that all of them in general and in particular are to be rejected.

Conſideration XXXIX.

It often happens, that in Diſputes between Roman Catholicks and their Adverſaries, the Queſtion is not concerning the Text of Scripture, that is to ſay, whether the Book, out of which the Text is taken, be Canonical; or whether the Tranſlation be good and faithful; but only concerning the true Senſe and Meaning of the Text. The Roman Catholicks own it their Obligation to expound the Scripture according to the Senſe of the Primitive Church, and of the ancient Fathers. The Proteſtants forge new Interpretations, not only contrary to that of the Primitive Church and of the ancient Holy Fathers, but alſo contrary to each other, according as their private Spirit directs them. And in Caſes of this Nature I have often been at a ſtand, and doubted for ſome time which of theſe Expoſition and Interpretation

tation it were beſt to follow. But, upon mature Deliberation, my Reaſon dictated, that the Expoſition of the Roman Catholicks deſerv'd the Preference, as being more agreeable to that of the whole Primitive Church and of the ancient Holy Fathers; firſt, becauſe no Man can doubt, but the univerſal Authority of the whole Primitive Church carries greater Weight than the Authority of a few particulars, and of a later date; ſecondly, becauſe the Holy Fathers, for Sanctity, for Solidity of Doctrine, and for Diligence in ſeeking after Truth, were beyond Compariſon, more to be admired than the volatil Wits of our Innovators, who through Want of an extenſive Knowledge, and purely to indulge their Paſſions, have ſtrangely disfigured the Church of God. Over and above that theſe Holy Fathers lived nearer to the Days of the Apoſtles, ſome of them having been their Contemporaries, or at leaſt their immediate Succeſſors; ſo that they had certainly greater Lights toward a right Underſtanding of the Holy Scriptures, than the pretended Reformers of our Days can boaſt of, who come ſo many Ages after them. Laſtly, becauſe the Interpretation of the Holy

Fathers was antecedent to the Diſputes, which have of late been ſet on foot between Catholicks and Proteſtants; ſo that their Judgments were no ways biaſs'd by Intereſt or by Paſſion. Whereas the Sectaries of our Days being preposſeſs'd in Favour of one Side of the Controverſy, endeavour to turn, or to ſpeak more properly, to torture the Scriptures to their private Sentiments, inſtead of ſquaring their Sentiments to the Scriptures.

Conſideration XL.

But to ſet the Matter in its cleareſt Light, let us come to an Example. Theſe Words of our bleſſed Saviour, *Hoc eſt Corpus meum*, *This is my Body*, the Roman Catholicks underſtand in their proper and literal Senſe, becauſe they were never otherwiſe underſtood by the ancient Fathers or the Catholick Church. The Proteſtants will not allow of this Senſe. But then the *Lutherans* underſtand them one Way, and the *Calviniſts* another; and again the *Zuinglians* one Way, and the *Arians* another. And each of theſe hath no other Rule for his Interpretation than the Dictate of his private Spirit. To which therefore of

theſe

theſe private Spirits could I moſt ſecurely adhere? Or which of their Interpretations was I bound to receive? As I could not find that any of them had a better Reaſon than the reſt, to ſupport his Senſe, I judged it impoſſible to make a Choice. For Truth, whatſoever its Object be, is *one*, whereas Falſhood wears ſeveral Masks, and holds no Intelligence with Sincerity. To my thinking therefore it was much the beſt to follow in this Point the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, becauſe it offer'd me the beſt Security.

Conſideration XLI.

For the more perfect Diſcovery of the Truth I ſought after, I reſolv'd to read the moſt celebrated Authors of both Parties, that I might be able to judge how far their Doctrine agreed with that of the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church, and whether in all Points they agreed among themſelves. And therefore it was, that I peruſed a great many Books written by Roman Catholicks of divers Nations, as well Spaniards, Italians, Flandrians, and Engliſh, as Germans, Polanders, and Hungarians; and the Iſſue of this Enquiry was, that

I found a perfect Harmony among them as to Points of Faith; and their Deference to the ancient Fathers. It was Matter of Admiration to me, that their Schoolmen, who widely differ'd in Opinion as to other Subjects, ſhould all as with one Voice profeſs, maintain and teach the very ſame as to what concerns the Articles of Faith. I obſerv'd the like in the Writings of the ancient Holy Fathers, tho' they liv'd and writ in Times and Places very diſtant from one another, as *Ignatius* and *Chryſoſtome* at *Antioch*, *Athanaſius* and *Teleſphorus* at *Alexandria*, *Macarius* and *Cyril* at *Jeruſalem*, *Proclus* at *Conſtantinople*, *Gregory* and *Baſil* in *Cappadocia*, *Juſtin* at *Athens*, *Dennis* at *Corinth*, *Ephrom* in *Syria*, *Cyprian*, *Optatus* and *Auguſtin* in *Africk*, *Epiphanius* in *Cyprus*, *Ambroſe* in *Italy*, *Irenæus* in *France*, *Oroſius* and *Iſidore* in *Spain*, *Bede* in *England*, *&c.* But when I came to confront the Writings of our new Reformers with the Doctrine of the ancient Fathers, I found them as oppoſite as Eaſt and Weſt. In the next place I examin'd what Harmony theſe Proteſtant-writers kept among themſelves, but I clearly diſcover'd they were mightily at Jars, about Points of Faith. 'Tis

not

not only the *Lutherans* that quarrel with the *Calviniſts*; and the *Calviniſts* with the *Lutherans*; and both of them with the *Puritans*, *Arians* and *Anabaptiſts*; but even thoſe of the ſame Cloth, are ſtrangely at Variance about their Faith. The rigid *Calviniſts* are of one Perſwaſion, and the more moderate of another. The Remonſtrants teach one thing, and the Anti-remonſtrants teach the contrary. The *Puritans* maintain and teach, what the Presbyterians will not allow. And as for the *Lutherans*, ſome things are held to be of Faith at *Wittemberg*, others at *Lantsberg*, others in *Sweden*, others in *Hungary*, others in *Brandenburg*, and others in *England*. Beſides, that the *Lntherans* follow, in the Age we now live in, a Doctrine, they were ſtrangers to in the foregoing Age. They taught and believ'd one thing at the beginning of *Lutheraniſm*, and another thing in its Progreſs. What Account then ſhould I be able to give at the laſt Day; if to ſo many great Lights of the Church, I preferr'd a Handful of inconſiderable Men, who have neither their Learning nor their Virtue, and are over and above ſo divided among themſelves? I therefore judged it beſt, to ſet theſe all aſide, and to keep to the Fathers. *Con-*

Conſideration XLII.

But, tho' the Holy Fathers had been all ſilent, the very Stones and Remnants of Antiquity ſpoke to me, atteſted and recommended the Truth of the Roman Catholick Faith. For upon taking into Conſideration the old Churches, the Elections of Kings and Emperors and the Ceremonies uſed at their Coronation, the ancient Statutes of *Cæſars*, and of Monarchs, the Laws and Cuſtoms of the moſt ancient Univerſities, the Converſion of Nations to the Faith of Chriſt, the Inſcriptions cut in Marble, the Hiſtories and Annals of all Ages ſince the Birth of our Redeemer; all the memorable Facts that have happen'd ſince the firſt Promulgation of the Chriſtian Faith, the Journals and Calendars wherein are mark'd the illuſtrious Actions of the Saints, and the moſt ſolemn Days of the Year, which are ſtill in uſe among the Proteſtants themſelves, as the *Sundays* call'd, *Quadrageſima*, *Quinquageſima*, *Sexageſima*, *Septuageſima*, *Eaſter*, *Quaſimodo*, *Jubilate*, *Cantate*, *Rogate*, *&c.* All theſe things gave me clearly to underſtand, that no other Religion beſide the Roman Catholick was ever firmly planted

in

in the Chriſtian World, So that I had convincing Reaſons, not to ſeparate from Antiquity, nor to adhere to any of theſe Novelties, that bear ſo freſh Date.

Conſideration XLIII.

For near the ſpace of ſeventeen hundred Years the Roman Catholick Church has been attack'd by *Pagans* and *Gentiles*, by cruel Tyrants, by *Mahometans*, by *Schiſmaticks* and innumerable Hereſies, without being worſted; and to this Day ſhe defends herſelf courageouſly and invincibly, in a viſible and flouriſhing Condition. Nay ſhe is daily on the Increaſe, and extends her Limits wider and wider. On the contrary, ſo many Hereſies, and of ſo many different ſorts, which appear'd formidable for Strength and Power, and ſpread like ſo many rapid Torrents, have periſh'd, diſappear'd and quite vaniſh'd away. As for Inſtance, the Hereſies of the *Manichees*, the *Donatiſts*, the *Pelagians*, the *Iconoclaſts*, and a great many more. Now what can I infer from hence, but that the Roman Catholick Church was built by Jeſus Chriſt upon a Rock, and that it was of her our Saviour propheſied, when he ſaid, (1) *The Gates of Hell ſhall not pre-*

(1) St. Matth. 16. 18.

vail

vail againſt it: But that all the Sects have by Men been built upon a Sand, that the Rain has fall'n, the Rivers have over-flow'd, and the Winds have riſen, that they came upon thoſe Sects and overturn'd them, and made ſtrange *Havock?* And I may add, that they deſtroy'd themſelves, and that thoſe of later Growth will in Time meet with the ſame Fate, according to that Principle of our Bleſſed Saviour, (1) *Every Plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, ſhall be rooted up.* For theſe Reaſons I choſe rather to take ſhelter in the Houſe which was built upon a Rock, than in that which was built on the Sand, and threatned me with its approaching Ruin.

Conſideration XLIV.

I have frequently with great Attention view'd the Libraries both of Catholicks and Proteſtants; and in thoſe of the Catholicks remark'd three ſorts of Books plac'd into many Cells or Claſſes of a conſiderable Length, of which Books I could not find the leaſt Appearance in the Libraries of the Proteſtants. The firſt Claſs of theſe Catholicks Books had for its Title,

(1) *St.* Matth. 15. 13.

The

The Lives of Saints. Great Numbers there were of them, of every State; among the reſt an Infinity of Holy Virgins; there were alſo the Hiſtories of holy Widows, Biſhops, Hermits, Religious of both Sexes, Martyrs, Apoſtolical Men, ſaintly Kings and other holy Confeſſors; whoſe Lives contain'd their admirable and heroick Virtues, their Innocence and godly Converſation, their Piety towards God, and Charity towards their Neighbours, and all the Perfections of a Chriſtian Life I thought, and thought again of what I ſaw, and my Reaſon told me, that that muſt certainly be the true Religion, which abounded with ſo many virtuous Perſons: For we are told (1) That *a corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good Fruit——Wherefore by their Fruits ye ſhall know them.* Now all theſe virtuous Perſons, ſaid I to my ſelf, lived and died in the Roman Catholick Faith; what then can I infer, but that this is the true Faith?

The ſecond Claſs of theſe Books were, what the Roman Catholicks call *Spiritual Books*, which abounded with ſolid Doctrine concerning the Exerciſe of Virtue

(1) St. Matth. 7. 18. 20.

and

and of Christian Perfection. They treated of the Imitation of Jesus Christ, of the Contempt and Vanity of the World, of the Love of God and our Neighbour, of loving our Enemies and pardoning Injuries, of humility of Heart, of perfect Chastity and angelical Purity both of Body and Soul; of Conformity to the Will of God; of Meditation on the four last Things; of the Enormity of Sin; and of the Practice of Devotion, and of all other Virtues.

The third Class had for its Title *Moral Divines*, who treated at large of the Decalogue and Divine Laws of the Restitution of ill-gotten Goods, of the Reparation of Damages done to a Neighbour, of the Use of the Sacraments, and the Requisites to a due Administration of them; in fine, of all Things belonging to the Direction of Consciences.

As to the Libraries of Protestants, I met with nothing of this Nature in their Books. * No Lives of *their Saints*, because no Saints in their Communion: No *Spiritual Books*, because their Books have nothing conducive to Christian Perfection; nay, they are Strangers to the

* *He speaks of* Germany.

very

very Name. No *Imitation* of Jeſus Chriſt, for they judge it a Thing impoſſible. No *Exerciſe of Virtues* nor of good Works, which they think unneceſſary for the gaining of Salvation. Nothing of Chaſtity, nor of Conſcience; the very Name is hateful to them: Nothing of *doing Penance*, for, according to them, there ſerves no more to the gaining of Heaven, than the believing that our Saviour has ſatisfied his heavenly Father for our Sins. Nothing, infine, of *Moral Divinity*, for they hold that it is not poſſible to keep the Commandments, that all Sins are equally enormous, that the Sins of the Predeſtinate are not reputed Sins in the Sight of God, and that no Man ſhall be damn'd, ſave only for the Sin of Infidelity, I might add many more Particulars, which Fleſh and Blood have ſuggeſted to them, and which never deſcended from the Father of Lights; ſo that they cannot be improved into Principles of a Spiritual Life, but, on the contrary, are the Sources of an animal and brutal Life, of a general Depravation of Manners, and ſo many Inlets to the very worſt Effects of Libertiniſm and Concupiſcence.

Con-

Conſideration XLV.

I likewiſe ſet their Conventicles (thoſe eſpecially, in which the Confeſſions of *Augsburg*, *Swizzerland*, *Geneva* and *England* were firſt minted) againſt the ancient general Councils of the Roman Catholick Church. But what compariſon could there be between Light and Darkneſs? The Cuſtom of the Roman Catholick Church, is, to invite to a general Council the Biſhops from all Parts of the World, the moſt learned Divines of every Nation, the Embaſſadors of Emperors and Kings; where Matters are diſcuſſed with the greateſt Exactneſs and Deliberation, Decrees drawn up by unanimous Conſent upon the Points in Queſtion, and theſe univerſally Accepted by the Faithful. The Councils too are held for a conſiderable Time, now and then for ſeveral Years, to the end that Matters may be more thoroughly examin'd and ſet in their cleareſt Light, and by this Means be ſo well fix'd, as never after to be call'd in Queſtion. But what can be ſaid for thoſe Aſſemblies of the adverſe Party, for inſtance, ſo

tha

hat of *Augsburg* (1) which gave Birth
o the Confeſſion of that Name? The
ompilers of it were a ſmall Parcel of
len, that had ſcarcely a Tincture of
ivinity; they ſet about it with Precipi-
tion; and finiſhed it in haſte, and in
publick Ale-houſe too. A few *Ger-*
ans were all that aſſiſted at it, without
he Concurrence of any ſingle Man from
ther Nations, Perſons already ſower'd
ith Prejudices, ſwell'd with Pride, and
bandon'd to a ſenſual and voluptuous
ife. Few Towns and Princes receiv'd
, the greateſt Part rejected it; and it
as ſeveral Times been alter'd and re-
orm'd. When I had well conſider'd how
hings went on both Sides, I thought it
neceſſary Piece of Prudence, as to the
egulating of my Faith, rather to follow
he Judgment of Catholick Councils, than
he haſty Reſolutions of ſuch tumultuous
Aſſemblies.

Conſideration XLVI.

The Conſcience of Catholicks and
hat of Proteſtants were the Subject of
his *Conſideration*.

(1) *See Monſr.* Meaux's *Hiſtory of Variations.* Lib. 3.

Con-

Conſcience is an Act of the Underſtanding or Reaſon, which dictates to us that a Thing is lawful or unlawful, and, by conſequence, that it is to be done, or left undone. So that Conſcience is the immediate and neareſt Rule of our Will. Let us then conſider thoſe Rules, which are recommended by Catholicks on the one Hand, and by Proteſtants on the other.

The Catholicks give theſe,

1. 'Tis our Obligation to avoid Sin of what kind ſoever it be; and God has left it in the Power of Man's Free-Will, to ſin, or not to ſin.

2. Every mortal Sin deſerves everlaſting Torment; and any one ſin of this kind is enough to damn us.

3. A ſin ought not to be committed upon any Account: In ſo much that it were better a thouſand Times to die, than to fall into ſin, were it never ſo ſmall.

4. We muſt give an Account to God of the leaſt ſin, though it be but an idle Word.

5. A ſin of Injuſtice is incapable of Pardon, unleſs Reſtitution be made, or at

t leaſt intended, according to our Power.

6. After the Commiſſion of a mortal in, nothing remains but either Hell or enance.

7. Every good Action of ſuper-natural Order merits Glory, and ſuper-natural Grace with its Increaſe.

8. All our mortal ſins muſt be confeſs'd o a Prieſt, who has Power to hear and o abſolve us.

There are many other Rules of the ke Nature. Let us now conſider thoſe hat ariſe from Proteſtant Doctrine.

1. The Commandments of God are mpoſſible. No Man can keep them.

2. Every one muſt firmly believe that e is predeſtin'd to be ſav'd.

3. God imputes no ſin to ſuch as have his ſpecial Faith.

4. No ſin, but that of Infidelity, damns Man.

5. Good Works are not meritorious, n the ſight of God, of eternal Life.

6. There's no need of our doing Pe-ance for our ſins, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt lready by his Blood and Death has ſa-isfied for us.

7. It it not in our Power to avoid in.

8. None

8. None is obliged to confeſs his ſin
Faith alone is ſufficient to ſave us, &c.

Let any Man now judge what Co
ſcience he is likely to frame out of the
Principles, toward ſhunning of Evil, an
doing good. Whereas the Rules draw
from the Catholick Doctrine have no o
ther Aim, and are evidently deſign'd fo
Practice. Upon the Compariſon I wa
fully convinced, that for the Safety o
my Conſcience, it would be beſt to fol
low the Rules of Catholicks, and to be
ware of thoſe of Proteſtants.

Conſideration XLVII.

Nothing ſo much diſpleaſed me in th
Miniſters, as their continual declaimin
in all their Sermons againſt the Catho
licks, and eſpecially their ſcoffing a
Rites and Ceremonies, while they will
fully diſſemble thoſe Points which ar
of the greateſt Importance in their ow
Religion, and wherein the People's Sal
vation is deeply concern'd. As, tha
they are not really Prieſts, ſince the
have not the Power to conſecrate th
Euchariſt, nor to forgive Sins, whic
is yet the main Office of Prieſtly Digni
ty. So that the People are ſhamefull
deceiv'd by theſe Miniſters, who mak
the

hem believe they receive under the vo Species the Body and Blood of eſus Chriſt, when, for Want of Prieſtly ower in their Preachers, they receive im not under either, but barely Bread nd Wine, without any Addition what- ever. They likewiſe perſwade their ollowers, that they Teach nothing, but hat the Primitive Church and the Holy athers held and taught; which is abſo- utely Falſe, as they (1) know in their wn Conſciences. (2) They don't Teach hem to fly Sin, nor to do Penance for he Sins they have committed; neither lo they exhort them to well-doing or to ive in a Chriſtian Conformity to the Do- trine and Example of our Bleſſed Saviour.

Conſideration XLVIII.

In my Converſation with Catholicks, obſerv'd their Judgment as to bad and

(1) Luther de Servo Arbitr. *tom.* 2. *fol.* 438, 480. In *cap.* 21. Geneſ. *tom.* 6. *fol.* 254. Cont. Reg. Angl. *tom.* 2. *fol.* 344, 347. Zuinglius Declar. de Pecc. Originali. Calvin. Tract. de Reform. Eccleſ. Opuſc. *pag.* 781.

(2) *A Perſon of our Author's Years and good Senſe, would never have charged theſe Defects on the Miniſters in* Germany, *had he not known them by long Experience.*

looſe

looſe Catholicks; that they look'd upon all thoſe as ſuch, that neglected God's Commandments, that took no Care to do good Works, that declined Confeſſion, that ſeldom aſſiſted at the Holy Maſs, or approached to the Sacrament of Penance, that ran in purſuit of ſenſual Pleaſures, that obſerv'd not the Days ſet apart for Faſting, *&c.* Then I caſt my Eyes on the Proteſtants, and found, that all theſe Things a part, Perſons might have the Reputation of Pious and fervent Proteſtants. I inferr'd, that bad Catholicks therefore were at leaſt as good as the beſt Proteſtants; and I was confirm'd in my Opinion of what I had formerly learn'd, *viz.* that a bad Catholick makes an excellent Lutheran; a bad Lutheran makes an excellent Calviniſt; a bad Calviniſt makes an excellent Arian; and a bad Arian makes an excellent Mahometan.

Conſideration XLIX.

What yet forwarded my Converſion was the Remark I had made, that no Catholick ever turn'd Proteſtant in order to reform his Manners and to live a better Life, but meerly out of a Love for worldly Liberty, and that he might indulge

dulge his Paſſions without conſtraint. For I never ſaw any Religious Man or Prieſt Apoſtatize, that did not make it his firſt Care to procure a Wife. On the other ſide I obſerv'd, that thoſe, who from Proteſtants return'd to the Roman Catholick Faith, became Devout and Fervent, Zealous and Exemplary, and that very many of them renounced the World, on purpoſe to dedicate themſelves entirely to God in ſome Religious State. *Even* [1] *ſo every good Tree bringeth forth good Fruit: But a corrupt Tree bringeth forth evil Fruit.*

It likewiſe ſeem'd very ſtrange, that notwithſtanding ſo many Texts of Scripture concerning the Neceſſity and Advantage of Charity, Hope, Fear of God, Alms, and of other good Works, the Proteſtants yet ſhould teach that Faith alone is ſufficient to ſave us, tho' they meet with no ſuch Thing in the Holy Scriptures. For as we find this Encomium of Faith, (2) that *Abraham believed in God, and it was counted unto him for Righteouſneſs*; ſo we read in commendation of Hope. (3) *Great Plagues remain for the*

[1] St. Matth. 7. 17. [2] Rom. 4. 3.
[3] Pſal. 32. 11.

ungodly: *But who ſo putteth his Truſt in the Lord, mercy embraceth him on every Side.* (1) *Thou that art the Saviour of them which put their Truſt in thee.* (2) *Hope maketh not aſhamed.* (3) *And every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.*

Of Charity: (4) *Her Sins which are many, are forgiven; for ſhe loved much.* (5) *For Charity ſhall cover the multitude of Sins.*

Of the Obſervance of God's Commandments (6) *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.*

Of other good Worhs, (7) *If thou doſt well, ſhall thou not be rewarded?* (8) *All that are in the Graves — ſhall come forth, they that have done good, unto the Reſurrection of Life.* (9) *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was an Hungry and ye gave Meat: I was Thirſty and ye gave me Drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me in,* &c.

---

(1) Pſal. 17. 7.
(2) Rom. 5. 5.
(3) 1 John 3. 3.
(4) St. Luke 7. 47.
(5) 1 Pet. 4. 8.
(6) St. Matth. 19 17.
(7) Gen. 4. 7.
(8) St. John 5. 29.
(9) St. Matth. 25. 34, 35, 36.

Of

Of Penance, (1) *Except ye do Penance, ye ſhall all likewiſe Periſh.*

Of Mercy, (2) *By mercy and truth Iniquity is purged.* (3) *Bleſſed are the merciful: For they ſhall obtain mercy.*

Of Alms, (4) they *deliver from all Sin and Death.* (5) *Give Alms of ſuch Things as you have: And behold, all Things are clean unto you.*

Of pardoning Injuries, (6) *Forgive and ye ſhall be forgiven.* (7) *For if ye forgive Men their Treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you.*

I therefore concluded, my ſafeſt Way was to embrace the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, which teaches indeed that Faith is neceſſary to Salvation, but yet excludes not Hope, nor Charity, nor other good Works. For, as St. *Paul* teaches, (8) *Now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, theſe three* [Virtues] *but the greateſt of theſe is Charity.* (9) *And though I have all Faith* [poſſible] *ſo that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am Nothing.* Now if all theſe Truths be unque-

(1) St. Luke 13. 5
(2) Prov. 16. 6.
(3) St. Matth. 5. 7.
(4) Tob. 4. 11.
(5) St. Luke 11. 41.
(6) St. Luke 6. 37.
(7) St. Matth. 6. 14.
(8) 1 Cor. 13. 1 3
(9) Ibid. 2.

ſtionable, as all muſt own they are, it follows that *Faith alone* will never bring me to Salvation. By Conſequence, 'tis falſe to ſay, that all other good Works are of no Advantage towards this great End; and a more horrible Miſtake yet to ſay they are all Sins, and therefore not only uſeleſs to the Buſineſs of Salvation, but ſo many ſteps towards everlaſting Miſery and Damnation. (1)

Conſideration L.

I obſerv'd how ſeveral Proteſtants, who had ſeem'd for many Years to be fixt in their Perſwaſion, were converted toward the End of their Days, and deſired to die in the Roman Catholick Faith. But never did I meet with any Catholick, that wiſh'd to die in any other Religion. Now 'tis chiefly at the Hour of Death that the Soul opens its Eyes into a clearer Proſpect of things Eternal. For my own Part, I intended to live, as I

(1) Luther *de Serv. Arbitr. tom.* 2. *fol.* 453. ſi pii bonum operarentur propter regnum obtinendum nunquam obtinerent. *In cap.* 2. *ad Gal. tom.* 5 *fol.* 232. Omnia opera, etiam ſacratiſſimæ Legis Dei adeo non præſtant Juſtitiam, ut etiam peccata ſint, & hominem pejorem faciant coram Deo.

ſhould

ſhould wiſh to die. And for that Reaſon I came to a Reſolution to embrace immediately the Catholick Faith; becauſe Death is as certain, as its Hour is uncertain. Beſides, that the Catholicks, to whom I ſpoke concerning my Converſion, aſſured me, that if I were to be damned for embracing the Catholick Faith, they were ready to Anſwer for me at the Day of Judgment, and to take my Damnation upon themſelves: An Aſſurance, I could never extort from the Miniſters of any Sect, in Caſe I ſhould live and die in their Religion. Whence I inferr'd that the Roman Catholick Faith was built upon a better Foundation, than any of thoſe Sects that have divided from it.

The Conclusion: Or a Review of the Motives, and Reasons, why the Roman Catholick Faith ought to be chosen and embrac'd preferably to all other Religions this Day in Christendom.

TO THE

SECTARIES.

THink not, my dear Friends, that I rashly and inconsiderately abandon'd the Errors of your Party, to embrace the Roman Catholick Faith, out of any Prospect of worldly Advantage. No, it was purely out of a concern for my Salvation, and after mature Deliberation that I did it, as you may judge from these Motives, which I shall sum up in a few Words.

1. You *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* pretend to establish an evangelical State. This seems to me as impossible, as for the East and West Winds to Blow from the same Quarter. For, so long as you hold several Articles of Faith by direct opposite to one another, I shall never be able

able to comprehend, how the jarring Doctrine of your two Religions can hold Intelligence with the Goſpel. Things different from each other, can never ſquare with any Third; as we learn from the Dictates of common Senſe.

2. If one of theſe two Religions be conformable to the Goſpel, and by conſequence *Evangelical*, for Example the *Lutheran*; it muſt have Arguments on its ſide, which the Calviniſt Religion cannot equally make uſe of to prove it ſelf *Evangelical*: And ſo on the other ſide. Now no ſuch Arguments were ever produced, what Reaſon then could I have to profeſs my ſelf a *Lutheran* rather than a *Calviniſt*; or a *Calviniſt* rather than a *Lutheran*; or, in fine, to believe the one Party more *Evangelical* than the other?

3. I have never been able to learn, upon what Account the *Lutherans* alone call themſelves *Evangelical*, or why the *Calviniſts* ſtyle themſelves the *Reform'd Religion*. Nor can it enter into my Head, why the *Anabaptiſts*, the new *Arians*, and the *Unitarians* may not with as good a Grace aſſume to themſelves the ſame Appellation. For *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* have nothing to ſay in their own De-

ſence, but what theſe with equal colour of Reaſon will plead in Favour of their Sects. As therefore no better Arguments appear to ſupport the Cauſe of *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts*, than for that of the *Anabaptiſts*, the *Arians* and of all thoſe other Sects, to which *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* deny the Privilege of theſe new-coin'd Titles; by a Parity of Reaſon the *Lutherans* and *Calviniſts* deſerve not to be called *Evangelical*, or the *Reformed Religion*, either in Regard of the Thing, or of the Denomination. So that I had juſt Grounds to reject theſe Sects, as being all built upon weak Foundations, and equally of no Account.

4. I knew for certain, as you your ſelves confeſs, that a great many of thoſe who lived and died in the Roman Catholick Faith, were ſaved. Whereas you are wholly ignorant, whether any one of your Followers enjoys that State of Happineſs: I acted therefore the part of a prudent Chriſtian, when I took the ſureſt Way to Heaven.

5. From hence alſo I inferr'd that the Roman Catholick was the true Faith, becauſe without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God. For, whoſoever is ſaved, plea-

pleaſeth God. Therefore ſince ſo many Profeſſors of the Roman Catholick Faith have attained Salvation, it muſt of Neceſſity be the true and ſanctifying Faith.

6. I inferr'd again, that, if the Roman Catholick was the true and ſanctifying Faith, all the Religions muſt be falſe, that oppoſe it. For there is but one true ſanctifying Faith, as there is but one true God.

7. It is the Judgment of Proteſtants as well as of Catholicks, that Salvation may be had in the Faith of the Roman Church; but none beſides Proteſtants are of Opinion that it may be had in another Religion. This all Proteſtants, of what Denomination ſoever, affirm of every individual Sect; and Catholicks as poſitively deny it. Now a Thing agreed upon by two Oppoſite Parties, is unqueſtionably more certain, than what's affirm'd by the one, and denied by the other. As therefore I deſired to go upon the ſureſt Grounds, I acted the Part of a reaſonable Man in preferring the Roman Catholick Faith to all other Religions.

8. Upon conſulting what the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church have

left us in their Writings concerning Faith I found they praiſed, extolled, and recommended no other than the Roman Catholick, and rejected and condemned all that ſeparated from it, wherefore I reſolv'd to follow their prudent Counſels and ſolid Sentiments.

9. All the Saints we have had from the Infancy of the *Church* to theſe our Days, liv'd in the *Roman Catholick Church.*

10. In Defence of the Truths depoſited with this *Church*, ſo many Thouſands of Martyrs gave their Lives, and triumphed over Death, tho' it attack'd them with its ſharpeſt Torments.

11. All that ever fought againſt this Church in their Separation from it, as *Arius*, *Pelagius*, *Marcion*, *Macedonius*, *Mahomet*, *&c.* with their Followers burn in the everlaſting Flames of Hell. *Luther*, *Calvin*, and the like Innovators of theſe latter Days, were equally Arch-Hereticks. So that to take them for my Guides, were to run a Riſque of eternal Damnation.

12. The Faith of the *Church* of *Rome*, was that of St. *Paul*, as this Apoſtle tells us in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, *chap.* 1. *v.* 2. And, why ſhould I looſe my Time

in

in ſeeking any other Faith than that of this great Apoſtle?

13. Were I not by the Grace of God fix'd in the Faith of the Roman Catholick Church, theſe other Religions would ſo perplex and puzzle my Thoughts in making a choice, that I ſhould never be able to make it with any Peace of Mind. For I ſhould always have Reaſon to doubt, which, among ſo many different Religions, was the true and ſanctifying Faith.

14. In all other Religions, are found ſuch incredible Paradoxes, as can never be reconciled to the Principles of right Reaſon. This is ſhewn in the *Conſiderations*, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18.

19. All the Religions which now oppoſe the Roman Catholick, are of a new Invention; in ſo much that before the Year 1517, they were neither held nor taught, nor follow'd by any Man upon the whole Face of the Earth. This is prov'd in *Conſideration*, 19, 20.

21. Theſe new Religions are no other than ſo many unwholeſom Compoſitions, out of Hereſies from Time to Time condemn'd by the Church of God.

22. The Roman Catholick Church is the only one, which retains the true

Marks

Marks of the Church of Jeſus Chriſt, *viz.* that ſhe is *One*, *Holy*, *Apoſtolical and Catholick* or *Univerſal*.

23. 'Tis the only Religion, for which all Nations renounced, and ſtill in theſe very Days renounce Paganiſm and Idolatry.

24. The Heads of theſe new Religions were never able to work the leaſt Miracle in proof of their Commiſſion from Almighty God, to reform his Church.

25. On the contrary, they were a company of Libertines, Vow-breakers, Apoſtates, impious Blaſphemers and Men of no Account.

26. The Adherents of theſe Religions have never labour'd in the Converſion of Idolaters, but only in making Proſelytes of the worſt of Catholicks.

27. In the Roman Catholick Religion great Numbers of both Sexes, of illuſtrious Birth and of plentiful Eſtates and Fortunes do freely conſecrate themſelves to God's Service, and paſs their Lives in voluntary Poverty, and in Angelical Purity. In the other Religions we find none (1) diſtinguiſh'd by their Birth and

(1) *He ſpeaks of* Germany.

Qua-

Quality, that put themſelves in the Rank of Miniſters; and of theſe 'tis a Rarity to find one that embraces a Life of Continency, are evident Proof, that the Neceſſity of gaining a Livelihood is their only Motive in taking to that State. Whereas in the Roman Catholick Religion, 'tis a Love of God, a Concern for their Salvation, and a lively and true Faith which animates ſuch Numbers of devout Perſons entirely to devote themſelves to the Service of Almighty God.

28. Continency that ſingular Gift of God, is not beſtowed upon the Proteſtant Miniſters, as it is upon ſo many religious Men and Women in the Roman Catholick Religion, who by the Grace of God, live not only in a ſtate of Continency, but in that of a pure Virginity without Spot or Blemiſh.

29. Proteſtant Writers in moſt of their Arguments againſt Catholicks encounter without an Enemy; while they labour to overthrow what no Body maintains againſt them. But they ſeldom touch upon any Point of Doctrine, which is really taught by Catholicks. Becauſe their whole aim in their Invectives, it to create an Averſion to the Romans in the Hearts of thoſe they have debauch'd from the Church of *Chriſt*.

30. The

30. The Arms of Proteſtants againſt the Catholicks are Calumnies, foul Language and barefac'd Lies, without any one ſolid Argument to ſupport the Charge.

31. Neither can they anſwer Catholick Arguments; but by ſome Evaſion elude the Force of them; and whenſoever they are at a Plunge, their whole Buſineſs is to get out of the Queſtion as well as they can, and to leap directly into ſome other Point of Controverſy, and it is next to impoſſible to keep them to a Point.

32. The Followers of theſe new Religions interpret the Holy Scriptures as the freak takes them in the Head, and lop off from the Canon what Books they pleaſe. Nay, there is not that individual Man among them, tho' he be never ſo great Blunder-head, but makes himſelf his own Expoſitor. Whereas, among the Catholicks, the Canonical Books are every where the ſame, the ſame Expoſition, the ſame Senſe and Verſion.

33. Theſe new Religions are ſtrangely divided among themſelves upon Points of Faith; and even thoſe of the ſame Stamp (the *Lutherans* for inſtance) claſh

clash againſt one another in the Articles of their Belief, and in the very Catechiſms which they teach their Children.

34. The Editions of the *Augsbourg*-Confeſſion, which the *Lutherans* look upon as the Foundation of their Religion, vary from each other, and very widely differ from the Original.

35. Theſe new Religions open a large and ſpacious Way to a general diſſolution of Manners, and to all the wild Purſuits of Senſualiſts and Libertines; in a flat Contradiction to our Bleſſed Saviour, who has declared the Way to Heaven to be very ſtraight.

36. The Aſſertors of theſe Religions make their Fancy their Rule in expounding the Holy Scriptures, they clip off ſeveral Words and Texts, and lengthen out others, and change and falſify them as they judge expedient.

37. They have no Succeſſion of their Doctrine, nor of their Miniſters from the Time of the Apoſtles.

38. There's no Harmony among them, with regard to the Expoſition of the Holy Scriptures. As is prov'd in the *Conſideration* 38, 39, 40.

41. All the Monuments of Antiquity, all ancient Writings demonſtrate the Roman

Roman Catholick Religion to be the only one, which was founded, eſtabliſh'd and confirm'd in Chriſtendom.

42. Tho' the Church of *Rome* from her Infancy to theſe our Days has been attack'd by Tyrants, Idolaters, Pagans, and Hereticks; ſhe has always remain'd and ſtill remains Invincible, whereas ſo many other Religions have periſh'd and diſappear'd.

43. Proteſtants teach not a Doctrine helpful to Perfection, or the Practice of Chriſtian Virtues. There's little or no Inſtruction to be found among them upon Points of Morality, or the Obſervance of God's Commandments. But every thing is allow'd to the Deſires and Concupiſcence of deprav'd Nature.

44. The Aſſemblies of the Sectaries, even thoſe that hammer'd out the Confeſſions of Faith for the new Religions, can never be admitted into a Competition for Doctrine, Sanctity or the Concourſe of various Nations, with the general Councils of the Roman Catholick Church, nor with the Fathers who aſſiſted at them.

45. The Principles which Proteſtants go upon, are not at all calculated for the

the forming of a good Conſcience worthy of a Chriſtian.

46. Their Parſons have almoſt nothing in their Mouths but Calumnies contriv'd to bring the Catholick Religion into Contempt. They varniſh over the dangerous Maxims of their own Religion, and every Thing that tends to the Perdition of thoſe Souls, that are guided by them.

47. The moſt tepid and immoral Catholicks, are not worſe than the beſt and zealouſeſt of the Proteſtants.

48. No Catholicks go over to other Religions with a purpoſe to live more piouſly; but on the contrary, to live more at large.

49. The Scriptures in ſeveral Places give us plainly to underſtand, that Hope, Charity, Penance, Alms and other Works of Mercy, are meritorious of eternal Life: Which our pretended Reformers deny, upon this falſe Principle, that Faith alone ſuffices.

50. It often happens, that Proteſtants, who have been the moſt perverſe in their Life-time, deſire to die, and do effectually die in the Faith of the Roman Catholicks. But we do not find that

any

any Catholick desires to make his *Exit* in any other Religion.

Lastly, I must own, it has always given me great Offence, that the Ministers of all these Sects, tho' they highly extol the Merits and Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, do yet neglect to exhort their People to an Imitation of his Life; and even give them Occasion to be heedless in those great Duties of avoiding Sin, of doing Penance for Sins committed, of applying themselves to the Practice of Virtue and to Good Works, by rivetting in their Memory this pernicious Error, that our Saviour has by his Death so abundantly satisfied for our Sins, and purchased Heaven for us, that all we have to do, is to believe in him. So that from the Passion, and Death, and Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, these poor deluded People take Occasion to indulge themselves in their criminal Excesses. But the Orthodox Faith teaches us, that notwithstanding the Passion and Death of the Son of God be of themselves more than sufficient to cancel all the Sins of Men, and that his Merits are of infinite Value, our Saviour will yet have us to apply the Fruits of them to ourselves, by imitating his Virtues, and co-

operating

operating with his dolorous Paſſion in declining Evil and in doing Good. Jeſus Chriſt came into this World upon a double Deſign: Firſt to ſatisfy for our Sins, and to deliver us from eternal Damnation; Secondly, to give us a moſt perfect Pattern of all Virtues, and to inſpire us with a Deſire to copy them in our Lives; as he has told us in theſe Words, (1) *I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do, as I have done to you.* (2) *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.* We are alſo inform'd by St. *Peter*, (3) That *Chriſt ſuffer'd for us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps.*

And now I addreſs my ſelf to you, my once Fellow-members in Religion, and ſtill my dear Relations, Friends and Country-men, and I conjure you by the five Wounds of Jeſus Chriſt, by his moſt precious Blood, the Price of our Redemption, and by the Concern you ought to have for the eternal Welfare of your Souls, not to quit a certain Way to Heaven for an uncertain. Conſider ſeriouſly, what that Faith was which your

(1) St. John 13. 15. (2) St. Matth. 11. 29.
(3) 1 Pet. 2. 21.

Anceſtors

Anceſtors profeſs'd, and which the firſt Chriſtian of your Nation upon leaving Paganiſm embrac'd. Conſider, in what Religion thoſe great Saints lived, whom you own for ſuch. Weigh ſeriouſly theſe Motives of my Converſion, which I offer you with a Heart that's full of a moſt ſincere Affection. Return to the Way of your Fathers, to the Path of the Saints, to the Religion which has ſtood for ſo many Ages, and been confirm'd, maintain'd and water'd with the Blood of ſo many Martyrs: A Religion, which all the ancient Fathers of the Primitive Church aſſerted and approv'd: A Religion, againſt which, as our Bleſſed Saviour has engaged his Word, the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail. Have always an Eye to the Salvation of your Souls. *For* (1) *what is a Man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? Or what ſhall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?* We have but one Soul, and its Felicity lies at Stake in this great Affair. Eternal Salvation is not to be gain'd, but by a true Faith: This true Faith is only one, and no where to be

(1) *St.* Matth. 16. 26.

found

found, but in the Roman Catholick Communion. Embrace it therefore, and follow my Example in this Holy Resolution. May God ſtrengthen you with his Grace ſo to do; that in this true Faith we may advance together toward the Manſions of eternal Bliſs.

Every Plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, ſhall be rooted up, Matth. 15. 13.

FINIS.

Numb. 2069.

The Post Boy.

London, July 1. 1708.

There being Two Mails due from Holland, *and the Foreign News that came in with the laſt, being, by this Time, exhauſted, we ſhall take this Opportunity to communicate to the Publick the following remarkable Piece, which has given juſt Offence to moſt of the* Proteſtants *abroad.*

'*DECISION* of the Faculty of
'Divinity of *Helmſtad*, (a famous
'Lutheran Univerſity in the Dut-
'chy of *Brunſwick*) of the Que-
'ſtion propounded on Occaſion
'of the Princeſs of *Wolfembuttel's*
'Mar-

' Marriage with *Charles* III. King
' of *Spain*.

' The ſaid Queſtion was propounded in
' theſe Terms?

Whether a Proteſtant Princeſs, deſtin'd to marry a Catholick Prince, may with a ſafe Conſcience, embrace the Catholick Religion.

DECISION.

' WE anſwer, That the Queſtion propounded cannot ſolidly be ſolv'd, without deciding firſt, Whether or no the Catholicks are in fundamental Errors, and ſuch as are oppoſite to Salvation? Or, which is the ſame Thing, Whether the Conſtitution of the *Romiſh* Church be ſuch, as that one may Practiſe in it the true Worſhip of God, and attain Salvation?

' Our Anſwer to the Second Query, on which the Firſt depends, is, without Heſitation, in the *Affirmative*, for theſe Three Reaſons.

Firſt, ' Becauſe the Catholicks are, at the bottom, of the ſame Religion with us, and have the neceſſary Faith to know God, in order to Salvation.

' For

'For the Foundation of Religion and
'Chriſtian Life, is, the Belief of God
'the Father our Creator; Of God the
'Son, the Meſſiah, who had been pro-
'mis'd, and has deliver'd us from Sin,
'Death, the Devil, and Hell; and of
'the Holy Ghoſt, who enlightens us.
'We muſt alſo admit the Ten Com-
'mandments of God, which teach us
'our Duty to God, and to our Neigh-
'bours; the Lord's Prayer, which in-
'ſtructs us how to pray; the Practice of
'the Sacraments of Baptiſm and of the
'Lord's Supper, according to Chriſt's
'Inſtitution and Command. Moreover,
'we muſt acknowledge *The Power of the*
'*Keys*, and believe, with them, That
'God has given in the Church, to the
'Apoſtles, and their Succeſſors in Apo-
'ſtolical Functions, the Authority of
'Declaring to the Penitent, That their
'Sins are forgiven, and to denounce to
'the Impenitent, God's Hatred againſt
'them, and what Judgments he pre-
'pares for them, and ſo either to remit
'or retain Sins: And therefore we ſome-
'times repair to the Confeſſion-Chair to
'receive Abſolution of our Sins.

'Whoever believes all this, and ſquares
'his Actions by his Belief, is in no

'Funda-

'mental Error; and being a Chriſtian,
'and a Child of God, and deſires to at-
'tain the Inheritance of eternal Life,
'he may live and die in that Condition.
'All theſe Articles of Faith are the
'Abridgment of the Chriſtian Doctrine,
'which is expounded in the Writings of
'the Prophets and Apoſtles, and are
'contain'd in the little Catechiſm, divi-
'ded into ſix Parts, *viz.* The Creed,
'the Lord's Prayer, and our Saviour's
'Words concerning Baptiſm, the Lord's
'Supper, and the Vocation of Miniſters.
'This Catechiſm is common with us
'and the Roman Catholicks; and when
'they have a Mind to inſtruct any Body
'In the Chriſtian Faith, thoſe are the
'Articles they teach and preſs, as the
'neceſſary Points to become a Chriſtian,
'and have a Share of Salvation: As may
'be ſeen by the Romiſh Catechiſms of
'*Caniſius*, and *Voluſius*, and the Cate-
'chiſm lately printed at *Hildeſheim*.
'Wherefore the Authors of the Confeſ-
'ſion of *Augsburg* ſay, in the Preface,
'*That all Chriſtians, both Catholicks and*
'*Proteſtants, fight together under Jeſus*
'*Chriſt*; and a little lower they affirm,
'*That our Proteſtant Religion is not contrary*
'*to the Chriſtian Religion, nor even to the*

'Roman *Catholick: And this will be ac-*
'*knowledg'd*, ſay they, *by conſulting the*
'*Writings of the Fathers.* Which is ſo
'true, that we firmly and confidently
'believe, that Perſons of undoubted
'Probity and Piety are found in Romiſh
'Monaſteries.

'Another Ground of Religion is the
'Belief of God's being a juſt Judge,
'who rewards Virtue and puniſhes Sin;
'than which Belief no other Motive is
'more conducive to direct us from wic-
'ked Acts, according to what the Apo-
'ſtle ſays, in the 11th Chapter of the
'Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, Verſe 6. *For he*
'*that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is,*
'*and that he is a rewarder of them that di-*
'*ligently ſeek him.* The Catholicks do
'not differ from us as to the Belief of
'this Article.

'Neither can it be deemed, that the
'*Romiſh* Church is not a *true Church*;
'wherein the Miniſtry of God's Word,
'and the Uſe of Sacraments ſubſiſt.
'For if it were no more, or had not
'been a true Church, all its Members
'would be in a State of Damnation,
'and irrecoverably loſt, which none
'amongſt us would dare to advance.
'Nay, *Melanchton* himſelf has maintain'd,

that

'that the Romiſh Church did not ceaſe
'being the true Church, becauſe the
'Word of God was ſufficiently taught
'in the divers Parts of the Catechiſm,
'which contains, the Ten Command-
'ments, the Creed, and the Lord's
'Prayer: And in the Service of Bap-
'tiſm, or in the Epiſtles and Goſpels
'that are read on Sundays. The Au-
'thor of that Book is *John Sambectus*,
'and the late Duke *Auguſtus*, of Glori-
'ous Memory, eſteem'd it to that De-
'gree, that he made ſome Alterations in
'it, out of common Places of *John Haſ-*
'*ſenreſſer*, a famous Divine of *Tubinge*,
'which Work is look'd upon as Ortho-
'nox, and as ſuch is read all over *Swe-*
'*den*, and in the Univerſities.

'In the third Place, both the Catho-
'lick and Proteſtant Churches believe,
'and publickly profeſs, in the Pulpit
'and in Writing, *That the Name of* JE-
'SUS *is the only Name in which Men may*
'*hope, and whereby they may obtain Salva-*
'*tion*; And that Man is not juſtify'd by
'the Works of the Law, that is, he is
'not juſtify'd barely by the Performance
'of the Law, but by GOD's Clemency
'and Mercy, and the Satisfaction our
'Lord *JESUS CHRIST* has given for
'us.

'us. This is the Doctrine of the Ca-
'tholick Church, as has been obſerv'd
'by the virtuous Abbot lately deceas'd
'at *Doesburg*, in the Preface of his
'Abridgment of the Rules of Faith:
'*The Church believes* (ſays he) *and did*
'*ever teach, that no Perſon, ſince the Crea-*
'*tion of the World, did ever attain Salva-*
'*tion, but by* JESUS CHRIST, *who is a*
'*Mediator between God and Men, according*
'*to what is written in the* Acts of the Apo-
'ſtles, (chap. 4. v. 12) *and as the Council*
'*of* Trent *has acknowledg'd it.*

'The ſame Chriſtian Aſſembly, (*mea-*
'*ning the Council of* Trent) teaches
'That the beginning of Juſtification
'ought neceſſarily to proceed from
'GOD, and his preventing Grace, that
'is, from the Vocation, whereby GOD
'calls us, without any Reſpect to our
'own Merits. They teach alſo that
'neither Faith, nor good Works, do
'merit Juſtification; and that we ought
'to believe, that Sins never will, nor
'were ever forgiven, but through the
'only Mercy and Grace of GOD, and
'the Will of JESUS CHRIST.

'Our Doctors have been oblig'd to
'own, that the Book entituled *Hortulus*
'*Animæ, the Garden of the Soul*, and the
'Rituals

'Rituals of *Mentz*, *Triers*, and *Cologne*, 'prove, that the Catholicks that are at 'the Point of Death are exhorted not to 'put any Confidence in their own Me-'rits, or other Means of Salvation, but 'ſolely to repoſe all their Truſt in *JE-'SUS CHRIST*. We might urge the 'Forcibleneſs of the Proofs that are 'drawn out of all thoſe Books; but we 'ſhall only quote the *Ritual* of *Mentz*, 'printed in the Year 1699. This is the 'Exhortation it preſcribes for Dying 'Perſons to whom the extreme Unction 'is adminiſtred. *Your Merits, and the 'Merits of all Mankind, are too inconſide-'rable for you to ſeek in them your Comfort, 'and the Hope of your Salvation: Since 'therefore we acknowledge the Imperfection 'of our Merits, we put our Truſt in the Me-'rits of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, 'whom GOD has given to the World, in 'his Love truly Divine. Wherefore place 'your Hope in that Merciful and Gracious 'GOD.* After the Sick Body has re-'ceiv'd the extreme Unction, they add, '*place your Comfort in that Eternal God, 'who is diſpoſed to ſhew Mercy to you, and 'gives you Strength to reſiſt all the Onſets of 'Sin and the Devil; and do not doubt but 'GOD will eaſily drown your Sins in the

'*Multude of the precious Merits of* JESUS
'*CHRIST.* 'Tis *by that* SAVIOUR *you*
'*ſhall be reſcued from Sin and the Devil,*
'*and your Soul ſhall be truly ſaved.*

'In another Catechiſm the Roman
'Catholicks direct a Dying Perſon to
'uſe this Prayer: *And in caſe I ſhould for*
'*the future live a Holy Life, but it ſhould*
'*be your Will that I ſhould die, I had ſtill*
'*rather die now, according to your Sacred*
'*Will, and forego the good Works I might*
'*make, if I liv'd longer.* Among other
'Directions for Prayers which may be
'ſuggeſted to Sick Perſons, this is found,
'by way of Queſtions and Anſwers:
'*You deſire that God ſhould uſe you rather*
'*with Mercy than Juſtice, and that he deal*
'*with you not according to your Merits, but*
'*according to his Infinite Mercy:* The ſick
'Body anſwers, *I do. Do you not be-*
'*lieve that you cannot be ſaved, but by the*
'*precious Death of* JESUS CHRIST *alone?*
'The ſick Body anſwers, *I believe it.*

''Tis Evident that theſe *Catholick*
'Exhortations are grounded in this
'Truth, *No Body is purified and delivered*
'*from his Sins, but by the Mercy of GOD,*
'*and the Merits of* JESUS CHRIST.
'Which however does not exclude good
'Works, or the Obſervance of GOD's

Pre-

'Precepts, as if good Works, tho' united 'to the preceeding Merits of *JESUS* 'CHRIST, were of no Uſe towards 'eternal Salvation: For no Man can 'aſſert the Unprofitableneſs of good 'Works, without contradicting the Ho-'ly Scripture.

'We read in St. *Matthew*, (*Chap.* xix. 'v. 17) *If thou wilt enter into life, keep 'the Commandments.* And (*Chap.* vii. *v.* '21) *Not every one that ſays unto me, Lord, 'Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Hea-'ven; but he that doth the will of my Fa-'ther which is in Heaven.* And St. *James*, 'in his Epiſtle, affirms, *That* Abraham '*was juſtified by his Wooks.* And if any 'Body ſhould not look upon this Text 'as Canonical, let them hear what, a 'long time before, *Daniel* ſaid to *Nebu-'chadnezzar*, (*Daniel*, *Chap.* iv. *v.* 27) *O 'King, let my Counſel be acceptable unto thee, 'and break of thy Sins by Righteouſneſs, and 'thine Iniquities by ſhewing Mercy to the 'Poor.* Is not the giving Alms to the 'Poor a good Work? And if good 'Works avail nothing, why does St. 'John, at the coming out of the De-'ſert, cry out aloud, *Repent*? Why does 'JESUS CHRIST ſay, that in order 'to be ſaved, a Man muſt *love God and*

'*his Neighbour*? Reaſon it ſelf teaches us, 'that a profligate Sinner does not de- 'ſerve the Forgiveneſs of his Sins, un- 'leſs he abhor 'em, ſtrike his Breaſt, 'and excite himſelf to Contriton, what- 'ever Confidence he may have in the 'Merits of *JESUS CHRIST*.

'We are therefore convinc'd, that in 'theſe Things the Roman Catholicks 'agree with the Proteſtants; and if 'there be any Diſpute between them, 'tis only about Words.

'Having demonſtrated that the Foun- 'dation of Religion ſubſiſts in the Roman 'Catholick Church, ſo that *one may be 'Orthodox, and live and die well, and ob- 'tain Salvation in it*: It is eaſy to de- 'cide the Queſtion propounded.

'The moſt ſerene Princeſs of *Wol- 'fembuttel*, may, in Conſideration of 'her Marriage, embrace the Catholick 'Religion; eſpecially, conſidering firſt, 'that ſhe did not offer her ſelf, nor has 'negotiated to be choſen; and that 'tis 'unqueſtionable, that Divine Provi- 'dence has led her into that Match. 'Secondly, That the ſaid Alliance will 'be moſt advantageous, not only to the 'Dutchy of *Brunſwick*, but alſo to the 'whole Proteſtant Church, and may

'ſerve

'ſerve to procure the Peace of all 'Churches ſo ardently wiſh'd for.

'Care only ought to be taken, that 'ſhe make no *Formal Abjuration*: And 'that difficult and intricate *Points of Con-troverſy* be not impos'd upon her as 'Articles of Faith. It will be ſufficient to 'give her plain Inſtructions.

Several Objections may be made to this our Anſwer, which, however, will appear to be groundleſs.

Firſt Objection.

'The *Roman* Catholick Religion re-'quires the Performance of humane 'Ordinances.

Anſwer.

The *Roman* Catholicks teach, that Divine and Apoſtolical Traditions, that is, the Doctrine which is not contain'd in the Holy Scripture, and which, nevertheleſs, proceeds from *JESUS CHRIST* and his Apoſtles, ought to be receiv'd with the ſame Reſpect with the written Word of God; Which we likewiſe acknowledge, and the only Diſpute about that Matter, between them and us, is, Whether ſuch and ſuch Tradition comes from God or the Apoſtles?

As to humane Traditions, the Catholicks are of the ſame Opinion with us.

Second Objection.

'The Catholicks enjoin the Invocation of Saints, when GOD alone is to be invok'd.

Anſwer:

The Council of *Trent* does not ſay it ſhould be done, but only, that it is good and profitable to do it. Nor will any good Chriſtian refuſe to invoke them, when he conſiders, that no other Power is aſcrib'd to them, but only to pray for us; and that the Greek Church, for Fourteen Ages paſt, has practis'd this Invocation, which, thus explain'd, does not, in the leaſt, derogate from God's Honour.

Third Objection.

'A *Roman* Catholick muſt believe *Purgatory*, of which, nevertheleſs, the Scripture makes no Mention.

Anſwer.

If by *Purgatory* be underſtood a Purging of the Souls that have departed this Life, from the Sins that ſtuck by them, ſeveral Doctors of the Church believ'd the ſame.

Fourth

Fourth Objection.

'Several Ceremonies that are per-'form'd at Maſs, give Offence.

Anſwer.

To thoſe only who are ignorant of what thoſe Ceremonies ſignify; for there is none of them but has a good Repreſentation, touching which, amongſt many others, one may conſult the Catechiſm of *Hildeſheim p.* 45. *& ſeqq.* As for the reſt, the Maſs is a Figure and Repreſentation of the moſt bitter Paſſion and Death of *JESUS CHRIST.*

Fifth Objection.

'The *Roman* Catholicks are forbid the 'Uſe of the bleſſed Cup in the Sacra-'ment.

Anſwer.

As Men's Incredulity does not take away God's Promiſes, ſo the Privation of the Cup cannot be imputed to the Laicks, ſince 'tis none of their Fault, but 'tis rather to be believ'd, that if they approach the Lord's Table with a contrite Heart and Confidence, they become Partakers of the Body and Blood of CHRIST, as well as the Proteſtants; ſo that, among the Catholicks, the Prieſt receives no more than a Laick. In ſhort, it muſt be acknowledg'd, that

there's

there's no where any Precept for granting the Cup to the Laicks, which only belong'd to the Apoſtles and Prieſts, as plainly appears from the 26th Chapter of St. *Matthew*, where *they* were *All* (*viz.* the Apoſtles) order'd to drink of it; which ſhews, how the Text of St. *Mark*, Chap. 14. *They all drank of it*, is to be underſtood.

Sixth Objection.

The *Roman* Catholicks are oblig'd to believe Seven Sacraments, altho' there be but Two.

Anſwer.

The Etymology of the Word *Sacrament* is not found in Scripture, nor whether there be but Two or Seven. Thus the Confeſſion of *Augsburg* reckons ſometimes Two only, and ſometimes Three, by adding the Abſolution to the Lord's Supper and Baptiſm; which the Roman Catholicks acknowledge to be the Principal. In like manner, the Proteſtants own, that there are in Scripture more than Two or Three ſecret Signs of Myſteries; for, without doubt, when the *Roman Catholicks* make the Impoſition of Hands and Matrimony, they ground themſelues on what we read in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles. That the Ho-

ly

ly Ghoſt did confirm them in the Faith on the Day of Pentecoſt; and on what St. *Paul* ſays in the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, Chap. v. 32. *This is a great Myſtery.*

The Concluſion.

We are ever ready to anſwer other Objections, either in Writing, or by Word of Mouth; tho' 'tis chiefly to be obſerv'd, that the Controverſies that are between us and the *Roman Catholicks*, do not concern the Princeſs of *Wolfembuttel*, whoſe Buſineſs only is to continue in the Simplicity of Faith, which is beſt: The reſt belongs to the Divines, among whom there are thoſe, in both Perſuaſions, whoſe Eyes God has open'd, ſo that they clearly perceive, that the Diſtance between 'em is not ſo great as is commonly ſaid. To this purpoſe, what the truly Learned *Philip Melanchthon* ſaid in his Judgment of the modern Controverſies, addreſs to *Francis* I. *Part* IV. *p.* 34. deſerves particular Obſervation: *In ſhort*, ſays he, *'tis an eaſy matter to put an end to all Diſputes; and I hope that thoſe who are pious, and fear God, will agree in all Things.* God grant they may; and that the preſent Deciſion may conduce to the Glory of his Name, and the Temporal and Eternal Welfare of theſe Fami-

Families, pursuant to the Will of *JESUS CHRIST*, our common Saviour.

These are Wishes of all the Professors of Divinity of the University of Helmstad, April 28. 1707.

Copies of Two Papers written by the late King Charles *II. of Blessed Memory.*

The First *Paper.*

THE Discourse we had the other Day, I hope satisfied you in the main, that Christ can have but one Church here upon Earth, and I believe that it is as visible as that the Scripture is in Print; that none can be that Church, but that, which is called the *Roman Catholick* Church. I think you need not trouble your self with entring into that Ocean of particular Disputes, when the main, and in truth, the only Question is; where that Church is, which we profess to believe in the two Creeds? We declare there to believe one Catholick, and Apostolick Church, and

and it is not left to every phantaſtical Man's Head to believe as he pleaſes, but to the Church, to whom Chriſt left the Power upon Earth to govern us in Matters of Faith, who made theſe Creeds for our Directions. It were a very irrational thing to make Laws for a Country, and leave it to the Inhabitants, to be the Interpreters and Judges of thoſe Laws; for then every Man will be his own Judge, and by conſequence no ſuch thing as either right or wrong. Can we therefore ſuppoſe that God Almighty would leave us at thoſe Uncertainties, as to give us a Rule to go by, and leave every Man to be his own Judge? I do ask any ingenious Man, whether it be not the ſame thing to follow our own Fancy or to interpret the Scripture by it? I would have any Man ſhew me, where the Power of deciding Matters of Faith is given to every particular Man. Chriſt left his Power to his Church even to forgive Sins in Heaven, and left his Spirit with them, which they exerciſed after his Reſurrection: Firſt by his Apoſtles in theſe Creeds, and many Years after by the Council at *Nice*, where that Creed was made that is called by that Name, and

by

by the Power which they had received from Chriſt, they were the Judges even of the Scripture it ſelf many Years after the Apoſtles, which Books were Canonical and which were not. And if they had this Power then, I deſire to know how they came to loſe it, and by what Authority Men ſeparate themſelves from that Church? The only Pretence I ever heard of, was, becauſe the Church has failed in wreſting and interpreting the Scripture contrary to the true Senſe and Meaning of it, and that they have impoſed Articles of Faith upon us, which are not to be warranted by God's Word? I do deſire to know who is to be Judge of that, whether the whole Church, the Succeſſion whereof has continued to this Day without Interruption, or particular Men who have raiſed Schiſms for their own Advantage?

This is a true Copy of a Paper I found in the late King my Brothers ſtrong Box written in his own Hand.

JAMES R.

The

The Second Paper.

IT is a ſad thing to conſider what a World of Hereſies are crept into this Nation; Every Man thinks himſelf as competent a Judge of the Scriptures as the very Apoſtles themſelves; and 'tis no wonder that it ſhould be ſo, ſince that part of the Nation, which looks moſt like a Church, dares not bring the true Arguments againſt the other Sects, for fear they ſhould be turned againſt themſelves, and confuted by their own Arguments. The Church of *England* (as 'tis call'd) would fain have it thought, that they are the Judges in matters Spiritual, and yet dare not ſay poſitively that there is no Appeal from them, for either they muſt ſay, that they are Infallible (which they cannot pretend to) or confeſs that what they decide in matters of Conſcience, is no further to be followed, than it agrees with every Man's private Judgment. If Chriſt did leave a Church here upon Earth, and we were all once of that Church, how? and by what Authority, did we ſeparate from that Church? If the power of interpreting of Scripture be in every Man's Brain, what need have

we

we of a Church or Church-men? To what purpoſe then did our Saviour, after he had given his Apoſtles Power to Blind and Looſe in Heaven and Earth, add to it, that he would be with them even to the End of the World? Theſe Words were not ſpoken Parabolically, or by way of Figure. Chriſt was then aſcending into his Glory, and left his Power with his Church even to the End of the World. We have had theſe hundred years paſt, the ſad Effects of denying to the Church that Power in matters Spiritual, without an Appeal. What Country can ſubſiſt in Peace or Quiet, where there is not a Supream Judge from whence there can be no Appeal? Can there be any Juſtice done where the Offenders are their own Judges, and equal Interpreters of the Law, with thoſe that are appointed to adminiſter Juſtice? This is our Caſe here in *England* in matters Spiritual; for the Proteſtants are not of the Church of *England*, as 'tis the true Church from whence there can be no Appeal; but becauſe the Diſcipline of that Church is conformable at that preſent to their fancies, which as ſoon as it ſhall contradict or vary from, they are ready to embrace or join with the next Congregation of People,

People, whoſe Diſcipline and Worſhip agrees with their Opinion at that time, ſo that according to this Doctrine there is no other Church, nor Interpreter of Scripture but that which lies in every Mans giddy Brain. I deſire to know therefore of every ſerious Conſiderer of theſe things, whether the great work of our Salvation ought to depend upon ſuch a ſandy Foundation as this? Did Chriſt ever ſay to the Civil Magiſtrate (much leſs to the People) that he would be with them to the end of the World? Or did he give them the Power to forgive Sins? St. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, ye are God's Husbandry, ye are God's Building; we are Labourers with God. This ſhews who are the Labourers, and who are the Husbandry and Building; and in this whole Chapter and in the preceding one, St. *Paul* takes great Pains to ſet forth that they, the Clergy, have the Spirit of God, without which no Man ſearcheth the deep things of God; and he concludeth the Chapter with this Verſe, *For who hath known the Mind of the Lord that he may inſtruct him? But we have the Mind of Chriſt.* Now if we do but conſider in humane Probability and Reaſon, the Powers Chriſt leaves

leaves to his Church in the Goſpel, and St. *Paul* explains ſo diſtinctly afterwards, we cannot think that our Saviour ſaid all theſe things to no purpoſe; and pray conſider on the other ſide, that thoſe, who reſiſt the Truth, and will not ſubmit to his Church, draw their Arguments from Implications, and far fetched Interpretations, at the ſame time that they deny plain and poſitive Words; which is ſo great a Diſingenuity that 'tis not almoſt to be thought, that they can believe themſelves. Is there any other Foundation of the Proteſtant Church, but that if the Civil Magiſtrate pleaſe, he may call ſuch of the Clergy as he thinks fit for his turn at that time, and turn the Church either to *Presbytery*, *Independency*, or indeed what he pleaſes? This was the way of our pretended Reformation here in *England*; and by the ſame Rule and Authority it may be altered into as many more Shapes and Forms as there are Fancies in Men's Heads.

This is a true Copy of a Paper written by the late King my Brother in his own Hand, which I found in his Cloſet.

JAMES R.

A

A Copy of a Paper written by the late Dutcheſs of York.

IT is ſo Reaſonable to expect, that a Perſon always bred up in the Church of *England*, and as well Inſtructed in the Doctrine of it, as the beſt Divines, and her Capacity could make her, ſhould be liable to many Cenſures, for leaving that, and making her ſelf a Member of the Roman Catholick Church, to which, I confeſs, I was one of the greateſt Enemies it ever had; That I chooſe rather to endeavour to ſatisfie my Friends, by reading this Paper, than to have the trouble, to anſwer all the Queſtions that may daily be asked me: And firſt, I do proteſt in the Preſence of Almighty God; That no Perſon, Man, or Woman, directly nor indirectly, ever ſaid any thing to me (ſince I came into *England*) or uſed the leaſt endeavour to make me change my Religion: It is a Bleſſing I wholly owe to Almighty God, and I hope the hearing of a Prayer I daily made him, ever ſince I was in *France*, and *Flanders*; Where ſeeing much of the Devotion of the Catholicks (tho' I had very little my ſelf) I made it my continual requeſt to Almighty

Almighty God; that if I were not, I might, before I died, be in the true Religion: I did not in the leaſt doubt, but that I was ſo, and never had any m nner of Scruple 'till *November* laſt; when reading a Book, called the Hiſtory of the Reformation, by Dr. *Heylin*, which I had heard very much commended, and had been told, if ever I had any Doubt in my Religion, that would ſettle me; Inſtead of which, I found it the Deſcription of the horrideſt Sacrileges in the World; And could find no Reaſon, why we left the Church, but for Three the moſt abominable ones, that were ever heard of amongſt Chriſtians: Firſt, *Henry* VIII, renounces the Pope's Authority, becauſe he would not give him leave to part with his Wife, and Marry another, in her Life time: Secondly, *Edward* VI. was a Child, and govern'd by his Uncle, who made his Eſtate out of Church Lands.

And then Queen *Elizabeth*, who being no lawful Heireſs to the Crown, could have no way to keep it, but by renouncing a Church that could never ſuffer ſo unlawful a thing to be done by one of her Children. I confeſs, I cannot think the Holy Ghoſt could ever be in ſuch Councils; and it is very ſtrange, that, if the Biſhops had no Deſign, but (as they ſay) the reſtoring us to the Doctrine of the Primitive Church; they ſhould never think upon it, 'till *Henry* VIII. made the Breach upon ſo unlawfnl a Pretence. Theſe Scruples being raiſed, I begun to conſider of the Difference between the Catholicks and Us; and examin'd them as well as I could by the Holy Scripture, which, though I do not pretend to be able to underſtand, yet, there are ſome things I found ſo eaſy, that I cannot but wonder, I had been ſo long without finding them out: As the real Preſence in the Bleſſed Sacrament, the Infallibility

fallibility of the Church, Confeſſion, and Praying for the Dead. After this, I ſpoke ſeverally to Two of the beſt (1) Biſhops we have in *England*, who both told me, there were many things in the *Roman* Church, which (it were very much to be wiſhed) we had kept; as Confeſſion, which was, no doubt, commanded by God: That Praying for the Dead was one of the ancient things in Chriſtianity: That for their parts, they did it daily, though they would not own it: And afterwards, preſſing one of them very much upon the other Points, he (2) told me, that if he had been bred a Catholick, he would not change his Religion; but, that being of another Church, wherein, he was ſure, were all things neceſſary to Salvation, he thought it very ill, to give that Scandal, as to leave that Church, wherein he had received his Baptiſm.

All theſe Diſcourſes did but add more to the deſire I had, to be a Catholick, and gave me the moſt terrible Agonies in the World, within my ſelf. For all this, fearing to be raſh in a Matter of that Weight, I did all I could to ſatisfy my ſelf; made it my daily Prayer to God, to ſettle me in the Right, and ſo went on *Chriſtmaſs-day* to receive in the King's Chappel; after which, I was more troubled than ever, and could never be in quiet; 'till I had told my deſire to a Catholick, who brought a Prieſt to me, and that was the firſt I ever did converſe with, upon my Word. The more I ſpoke to him, the more I was confirm'd in my Deſign; and, as it is impoſſible for me to doubt of the Words of our bleſſed Saviour, who ſays, the Holy Sacra-

(1) Sheldon *A. B.* Cant. Blandford *B.* of Worceſt.
(2) Blandford *B.* Worceſt.

ment

ment is his Body and Blood, ſo I cannot believe, that he who is the Author of all Truth, and who has promis'd to be with his Church to the end of the World, would permit them to give that Holy Myſtery to the Laity but in one kind, if it were not lawful ſo to do.

I am not able, or, if I were, would I enter into Diſputes with any Body; I only in ſhort, ſay this for the changing of my Religion, which I take God to Witneſs I would never have done, if I had thought it poſſible to ſave my Soul otherwiſe. I think, I need not ſay, it is not any Intereſt in this World leads me to it: It will be plain enough to every body, that I muſt looſe all the Friends, and Credit I have here, by it; and have very well weighed, which I could beſt part with, my ſhare in this World, or the next: I thank God I found no Difficulty in the Choice.

My only Prayer is, that the poor Catholicks of this Nation, may not ſuffer for my being of their Religion: That God would but give me Patience to bear them, and then, ſend me any Afflictions in this World, ſo I may enjoy a bleſſed Eternity hereafter.

St. *James*'s *Aug.*
20th. 1670.

FINIS.